

CHRISTIANITY

D. M. Bennett

A Portion of
'The Gods and Religions of Ancient and Modern Times'
(Vol. II)

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THE
GODS AND RELIGIONS
OF
ANCIENT AND MODERN TIMES.

BY D. M. BENNETT,

editor of "The Truth Seeker," Author of "The World's Sages, Thinkers, and Reformers," "The Champions of the Church," "Thirty Discussions, Bible Stories, Essays, and Lectures," "Interrogatories to Jehovah," "What I Don't Believe, What I Do Believe, Why and Wherefore," "From Behind the Bars," Joint author of "Christianity and Infidelity—the Humphrey-Bennett Discussion," "The Bennett-Teed Discussion," Etc., Etc.

Written in prison while serving out a sentence of thirteen months in the Albany Penitentiary, nominally for sending through the U. S. mails a pamphlet by E. H.

Heywood on the subject of Marriage and the Relations of the Sexes, but really for being an Infidel editor and publisher.

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TO
Mrs. MARGARET McEWEN and
Mrs. MARTHA VAN ALLEN,
(MOTHER AND DAUGHTER)
TWO NOBLE WOMEN,
(THE FORMER, WIFE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT OF THE PRISON)
WHO HAVE SHOWN MARKED KINDNESS, NOT ONLY TO THE
WRITER, BUT TO THE MANY SICK AND DYING IN THE
PRISON HOSPITAL (WHERE THESE PAGES WERE
WRITTEN), AND WHO BY THEIR CONTINUED
KINDNESS HAVE CAUSED MANY RAYS OF
CHEERFUL SUNSHINE TO FALL UPON
THE SICK AND HAPLESS PRISONERS,
(THOUGH DIFFERING IN RELIGIOUS VIEWS FROM THE AUTHOR)
THIS WORK IS MOST RESPECTFULLY AND MOST GRATEFULLY
DEDICATED.

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PREFACE.

What was said of Vol. I. of this work is equally true of this; it is largely a compilation, being drawn to a considerable extent from other writers who have given attention to the subject of ancient gods and religions. One who writes of the distant past is under the necessity of depending upon what has been handed down to us by the writers who wrote long ago, as well as those who have lived much later. I have not hesitated to draw freely from those who have written ably upon the subjects treated here. The object has been to give to the public the best information to be had upon the subject of the gods and religions which men have believed in in all ages of the world; and it is confidently hoped that this work imparts more of that kind of information—and adapted to the general reader—than has ever been embodied in any one work before.

It will be observed that in the treatment of the great religions of the world still in existence, as Brahmanism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Mohammedanism, but little is said of the numerous sects into which they all have been divided. It was not a part of the original design to enter into a description of all the subdivisions which have arisen from these great or general religions; that would have necessitated another volume, and would have made the work too unwieldy to answer the original purpose. Sects, bitter in animosity and hate, have grown out of very small differences in matters of belief; and it would undoubtedly become too tedious to the average reader to wade through a detailed description of these multitudinous little differences and slight variations.

It may not be amiss to again call attention to the disadvantages under which this work was written. To be shut up in a single room, with twenty sick and dying men all around,

with a limited number of text-books within reach, with the consequent heaviness of heart induced by the sense of the wrongs inflicted by bigoted and deadly enemies in the imprisonment suffered, is not a situation the best calculated, of all others, to produce that serenity and peace of mind best suited to book-making. It is hoped, however, that what was written under those circumstances may serve to a certain extent to interest and instruct those who take the trouble to read the hastily-written pages composing these two volumes.

The term of imprisonment which my Christian enemies succeeded in placing upon me is now over. I served out the allotted term, and have now been several weeks attending to the duties and cares of my editorial and publishing business. Three thousand kind and sympathetic friends met at Chickering Hall, in this city, and gave me such a reception, such an ovation, as any monarch or conquering hero, returning from a victorious campaign, might be proud of. The freedom enjoyed in the outside world, surrounded by friends and sympathizers, contrasts most favorably with the inconvenience, unpleasantness, tedium, and mental agony induced by being closely kept under lock and key with abandoned felons, with all the rigor, harshness, and severity which prisoners in our penitentiaries and state prisons are made to feel. Freedom, like health, is most fully appreciated by those who have been long deprived of it.

It is to be doubted whether the bigoted Christian foes who upon false pretense and great injustice brought about this imprisonment have succeeded in injuring myself and the cause nearest to my heart to the extent hoped for. It was undoubtedly wished to prevent my writing for a year, at all events, with the hope that the severity of prison life, upon a man over sixty years of age, might crush him and send him to his grave. But thanks to a naturally good constitution, an untroubled conscience, and the kindness of the family of the Superintendent of the prison, I lived my time out. I have written what these two volumes contain—by which, it is hoped, the world may be somewhat benefited—I am home again, and in good, vigorous health.

D. M. B.

New York, June 25, 1880.

CHRISTIANITY.

This is the religion of our own time and country, and so, though it is some six centuries the senior of the last system treated—Mohammedanism—it is thought proper to let it be the last system noticed in the volume.

The origin of Christianity, after all that has been written upon it and all the claims that have been set up, is, unfortunately, very obscure. The advocates of the system of course turn with great confidence to what are called the four gospels in the New Testament. and claim that there is found ample information and proof touching its origin and early character, but unfortunately these so-called gospels, are not proved to be authentic. As explicitly shown in the article on the Bible at the close of Vol. I., the origin and authenticity of the narratives attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John hang in great doubt and obscurity. It is conclusively shown that neither of these gospels was known to be in existence till the latter part of the second century, there being no account or indication that either of them was read in any of the churches nor quoted by any of the Fathers prior to that time. This is proof conclusive that the gospel according to St. Matthew was not written by Matthew; the gospel according to St. Mark was not written by Mark; the gospel according to St. Luke was not written by Luke; and the gospel of St. John was not written by John. This conclusion being inevitable, the authenticity and reliability of the gospel story is most fearfully shaken, and very little is left to hang a rational belief upon. All the world has upon which to predicate a belief respecting the story told of Jesus is found in these four narratives—that the Virgin Mary conceived him without the aid of a human male being, that she was overshadowed by the Holy Ghost, or the Highest, and in this

miraculous and unnatural manner became the mother of God or of the son of God, who had existed from the beginningless ages of eternity. After passing over an interim of thirty years, in which very little is said of him, and no account given of where he passed his time, or at what business he was engaged, his ministration of some eighteen months is brokenly and imperfectly detailed, and some very strange and improbable claims are set up as to miracles he performed and impossibilities executed by him, not necessary to repeat in this connection. He was ignominiously put to death upon the cross as a felon, when at the end of three days, or rather one day and two nights, he rose from the dead and appeared several times to his disciples, and after a period variously given as from one or two days to forty days, he was taken up into heaven, from which time he sat on the right hand of his Father to assist in conducting and judging the world.

These four gospel stories being all the foundation there is to build the structure of Christianity upon, when the authenticity of these is taken away there is nothing solid or reliable to rest upon. The light is also taken away, and we are left to grope in mists and darkness the most perplexing and disagreeable. The reader is recommended to turn to the article on the Bible referred to, and read that portion treating of the Four Gospels, and see that there is no proof that those gospels had an existence till more than one hundred and fifty years after the time Jesus was said to have passed away. He will then realize to some extent the great unreliability which pertains to the origin of this system of religion, and the little which the world knows with certainty about it.

When the reader is thus satisfied upon investigation that the origin of the system is most apocryphal, and is thrown into the extremest doubt; when he learns that the first gospel was not written by one who was a disciple of Jesus, that the second gospel was not written by the friend and scribe of St. Peter, that the third gospel was not written by the physician and historian Luke, that the fourth gospel was not written by the disciple whom Jesus specially loved, and that these so-called gospels are no better than spurious or forged gospels, he very naturally inquires, "What is the truth about

the origin of Christianity and what is the most probable theory of its rise in the world?" But at the best he can do he will learn that little but obscurity and uncertainty hangs over the early accounts of the Christian religion. He will learn that in the first and second centuries of the Christian era different Christian sects existed, but that they differed widely both as to the story and existence of Jesus and the doctrines he is said to have taught. Important among these sects were the Gnostics. They are represented as being very numerous in the first and second centuries. In Chamber's Encyclopedia it is stated that "in the second century Gnosticism had spread over the whole civilized world." They maintained persistently that Christ was never born, that he was a spirit, and denied that Jesus was divinely begotten, but was simply as any other man, and that the divine element rested upon him as the same element had previously dwelt with Zoroaster, Buddha, and other distinguished teachers and reformers. Christ, called by them Chreestos, they denominated one of the *Eons*, or eternal creative powers emanating from the Supreme Being—proceeding from the kingdom of light for the lower kingdom of darkness. But in the one case, however superior, he is yet allied to the lower angels and the Demiourgos, governing this lower world, but not having body and possessing no human characteristics. These Gnostics flourished two or three hundred years, and though they laid the foundation of Christian philosophy they were finally denounced as heretics and were ultimately outnumbered and suppressed. But the fact that they denied the existence of Christ in the form of a human being like a man, flourishing as they did in large numbers so soon after the reputed advent of Christ, and being people of more than ordinary intelligence, is most damaging to the authenticity of the story upon which the system of Christianity is founded.

In the great uncertainty which seems to exist as to the origin of the Christian system, it is not strange that many theories have been adopted. Robert Taylor traces it to Egypt, others find marks of its origin in Syria and Mesopotamia, thence spreading to Alexandria and other Greek towns, and afterward to Rome after the middle of the second

century. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian of Carthage, and Irenæus of Lyons, seem to have formed a trio and to have established Christianity in Rome. About the year 140, Marcion, the distinguished teacher of Gnosticism, established himself and his phase of Christianity in Rome, but this was afterwards stamped out as heresy. A friend of the writer of these pages has for years given much attention to the early history of Christianity, and has published a work bearing upon it under the title, "Revelations of Antichrist." In chapter xlv of that work, page 344, he comes to these conclusions:

CONCLUSIONS OF ANTICHRIST.

The story that Jesus Christ was born of the Virgin Mary in the days of Augustus Cæsar, and crucified under Pontius Pilate, is doubtless a creation of the second century.

The New Testament epistles and the Apocalypse, most of which were written before the end of the first century, contain no hint of the existence of an earthly child Jesus, nor of the reign of Tiberius, except in 1 Tim. vi, 13, where it is said that Christ Jesus witnessed a good confession before Pontius Pilate. But the epistles to Timothy and Titus are spurious productions of the second century, whereas the Apocalypse, written about the year 69, speaks of the lamb slain from the foundation of the world (viii, 8), and of the Lord being crucified in the great city spiritually called Sodom and Egypt (xi, 8).

In the gospels which made their earliest appearance in the second century we find the story of the birth, ministry, and death of Jesus in the days of Augustus and Tiberius.

In the writings of the so-called Apostolic Fathers we look in vain for the Virgin Mary, the infant Jesus, or the crucifixion under Pontius Pilate, until we come down to the Epistles of Ignatius, which are certainly spurious and a late product of the second century, if not of the third.

This side of the Apostolic Fathers, who, as before shown, knew none of the twelve apostles, nor even the thirteenth apostle, Paul Justin, is the earliest real and authenticated Father. Indeed he is as early as the two Apostolic Fathers

Polycarp and Papias, who died about the same time he did, all three being reputed martyrs between A.D. 163 and 168.

The writings of all the Apostolic Fathers prior to and contemporary with Justin do not aggregate more than two hundred full printed pages. The undisputed works of Justin alone exceed those of all the contemporary and prior Fathers.

Justin appears to be the earliest authenticated Christian who recognizes Jesus as born of the Virgin Mary and crucified under Pontius Pilate, and his information is derived from a gospel not now extant, which he calls "Memoirs of the Apostles," and from the apocryphal "Acts of Pilate."

In Justin's time the Gnostics flourished in their zenith. They had a phantom Jesus, who came down from heaven in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar (Marcion's Gospel, A. D. 140), and who *seemed* only to suffer crucifixion. They also had a Chreistos, who was one of the external uncreated Eons.

Of the writings of the Gnostics only a few fragments have come down to us, such as the Catholic Fathers have seen fit to quote.

Justin had a disciple, Tatian, who embraced Christianity at Rome, but after the death of his master he renounced the doctrine of the incarnation and humanity of Christ, and established himself at Antioch as a Gnostic. We have one small work of Tatian—about forty pages—written between A. D. 170 and 180. Of his other works there are only a few sentences; the Catholic church destroyed all heretical writings. Tatian had a gospel, says Theodoret (A. D. 430) which omitted the genealogies and all other passages showing that Christ was born of David according to the flesh (Sup. Rel. I., 484). Tatian's repudiation, after his migration from Rome to Antioch, of the human savior, is a very significant fact.

Theophilus was bishop of Antioch from A. D. 168 to 181, or later. He calls himself a Christian, and yet in the single work of his extant—about eighty pages—he never mentions Jesus or Christ, and ridicules the idea that a God can be born. He quotes largely from the prophecies of the Sibyl, and sparingly from the gospel, never telling us what Jesus says, but what "the gospel teaches," and what are the instructions of

the "Divine Word." His Christ is simply the Logos, or Word, and he quotes the first sentence of the fourth gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God," as what the "inspired (or spirit-bearing) John says." This is the first quotation by any writer from any evangelist by name. Theophilus does not seem to recognize the advent of Christ as having taken place, and dates Christianity from Moses, and even from the beginning of the world. He probably believed neither in the genealogy of Jesus nor in his historical existence.

Athenagoras, the Athenian philosopher and Christian, was the most elegant and perhaps the ablest of the early Fathers. We have about eighty pages of his works, written about A. D. 177. He nowhere mentions Christ or any event of his life; nor does he mention or quote from any gospel, but he puts into the mouth of the "Logos" certain sayings, some of which resemble passages in our gospels and others do not. (Plea for Christians, chapter xxxii). No wonder that neither Eusebius nor Jerome mentions him. He probably did not believe in a historical Jesus.

Hegesippus, a Palestine Jew, became a Christian and wrote five books of historical memoirs after A. D. 177, from which Eusebius made some extracts. The principal one—about the death of the Lord's brother James in Jerusalem—we have heretofore given (chapter xxvi). Hegesippus also describes the persecution of two "grandchildren of Judas, called the brother of our Lord according to the flesh." They owned and cultivated a farm of thirty-nine acres, valued at \$1,350. Being brought before Domitian (A. D. 81-96) and questioned concerning Christ and his kingdom, they both avowed themselves adventists, whereupon the emperor dismissed them with contempt as simpletons, and ordered the persecution to cease. Then the two hard-fisted farmers returned and "ruled the churches" (Eus. iii, 20). Again, Hegesippus describes the martyrdom of "Simeon, the son of Cleophas, our Lord's uncle," who succeeded his cousin James as bishop of Jerusalem about A. D. 68, and was tortured to death in the reign of Trajan (A. D. 100-117) at the age of 120 (Ib. iii, 32; iv, 22).

From this it appears that Hegesippus recognized the

humanity of Jesus Christ; and furthermore, he intimates that he suffered a violent death, like that of his cousin Simeon (Eus. iii, 32); nevertheless he says nothing about the genealogy of Jesus except by inference in speaking of his two grandnephews, the aforesaid farmers, who, he says, "were reported as being of the family of David" (iii, 20).

The fragments of the remaining Fathers, Dionysius, bishop of Corinth (A. D. 168-170); Melito, bishop of Sardis (170—), and Claudius Apollinaris, bishop of Hierapolis (177-180), throw no light upon the question of a historical Jesus until we come down to the voluminous works of the three great contemporary Fathers, Irenæus, bishop of Lyons (177-202), Clement of Alexandria (189-202 or later), and Tertullian of Carthage (193-220), who established the Catholic or Christian church, based upon the belief in Jesus Christ, born of the Virgin Mary and crucified under Pontius Pilate.

Let any one search the writings of the prior Fathers and find, if he can, one besides Justin who recognizes that fundamental doctrine of the church. Nay, more, let him find one besides Justin, Hegesippus, and possibly the foolish Papias, who distinctly and unequivocally recognizes a historical human Jesus.

[We are aware that two or three passages in the Epistle of Clement and a few more in that of Barnabas seem to imply the existence of a Jesus in mortal flesh. So also of like apparent import are certain passages in Paul's Epistles. This we admitted at the outset to be a formidable point (see p. 18); indeed, it was the only difficulty of any magnitude in our way. But we have demonstrated that Paul knew no Galilean apostles; we showed that his Christ was not the Christ of the evangelists; we have found the earliest trace of his epistles in the hands of Marcion, a Gnostic who denied the humanity of Jesus; and we have proved that Gnosticism existed before the Christian era. Furthermore, we have a right to presume that Paul's writings were tampered with after Marcion's time to suit the Catholic creed. It was our intention further to discuss the question of the nature of Paul's Jesus, but happily we are relieved of all difficulty on this point by the discovery that Paul flourished before the Christian era. And in view of that important discovery may not the Epistles of Clement and Barnabas, like those of Paul, be assigned to a very early period, even antedating the Christian era.]

Oh! had we the writings of only a few of the many Gnostics of the second century, doubtless the audacious fraud of the Catholic church would be apparent to the dullest mind.

But even Justin, the earliest champion of a historical Jesus, discloses the prevalence of a contrary belief in his time. In his "Dialogue with Trypho the Jew," he puts into the mouth of his opponent this remarkable language:

But Christ—if he has indeed been born and exists anywhere—is unknown, and does not even know himself, and has no power until Elias comes to anoint him and make him manifest to all. And you, having accepted a groundless report, invent a Christ for yourselves, and for his sake are inconsiderately perishing. (Ch. viii.)

Justin, in reply to this, offered to prove, if Trypho was willing to listen to an account of Christ, that his worshipers had "not been deceived" and had "not believed empty fables." At this some of Trypho's friends "laughed and shouted in an unseemly manner," whereupon Justin "rose up and was about to leave," but Trypho held him back by his garments and called for his proofs. Justin, however, would not proceed until the scoffers quitted the place or agreed to listen in respectful silence. Two of them accordingly withdrew in disgust. But when the discussion was resumed Justin turned the subject, and the two theologians talked about Abraham, Moses, and the prophets; nor did Justin allude to the gospel story about Christ for a long time, and when he came to speak of Jesus he said he was born in a cave and cradled in a manger, where he was seen by the Magi. (Ch. lxxviii.)

This agrees only in part with Matthew and Luke, and in part with the apocryphal gospels. Luke says the shepherds came and saw the babe in a manger (ii, 16), but does not say that the manger was in a cave. Matthew says the Magi came and saw the young child in a "house" (ii, 11). Now, a cave might be used as a stable, and a stable might answer for a house; but who would think of calling a cave where cattle were stalled a house?

But the apocryphal gospels have Jesus born in a cave which, from the description, could not have been a stable. Indeed, the "Protevangelion" has the child temporarily removed from the cave to an ox-stall to elude the search by Herod (ch. xxii); and "Pseudo-Matthew" has him removed to a stable on the third day in order to fulfil a prophecy (ch. xiv).

And both these gospels, as also that of the "Infancy," have the adoration of the Magi, angels, or shepherds take place in the cave. (Prot. 21; Pseudo-Matt. 12-16; Inf. 4, 5.)

St. Jerome, who lived at Bethlehem A. D. 400, repeatedly mentions the "cave in which the son of God was born" as then existing, with an "altar within," where "once was the Lord's manger." But before the discovery of the holy places of Palestine by Mother Constantine, the pagan women used to mourn for their beloved Thammuz, i. e., Adonis, in that very cave. It is said to be there still. Antichrist thinks of visiting it some day and chalking on the door *Cave Inn*.

The Ignatian epistles, which are doubtless later than Justin, contain frequent rebukes of those who deny the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

It is remarkable, however, that none of these rebukes are contained in the Syriac version, which is no doubt the earliest; but on the contrary there are two passages in the Syriac, both of which are repeated in the two Greek versions, which savor of Gnosticism. One is as follows:

Syriac.—Look for him that is above the times, him who has no times, him who is invisible, him who for our sakes became visible, him who is impalpable, him who is impassible, him who for our sakes suffered, him who endured everything in every form for our sakes. (Polycarp iii.)

Short Greek.—Look for him who is above all time, eternal and invisible, yet who became visible for our sakes; impalpable and impassible, yet who became passible on our account, and who in every kind of way suffered for our sakes. (Ibid.)

Long Greek.—Look for Christ, the son of God; who was before time, yet appeared in time; who was invisible by nature, yet visible in the flesh; who was impalpable, and could not be touched, as being without a body, but for our sakes became such, might be touched and handled in the body; who was impassible as God, but became passible for our sakes as man; and who in every kind of way suffered for our sakes. (Ibid.)

The other Gnostic passage is as follows:

Syriac.—There was concealed from the ruler of this world the virginity of Mary and the birth of our Lord, and the three mysteries of the shout which were done in the tranquillity of God from the star. (Ephesians xix.)

Short Greek.—Now, the virginity of Mary was hidden from the prince of this world, as was also her offspring and the death of the Lord; three mysteries of noise, which were wrought in silence by God. How, then, was he manifested to the ages? A star shone forth in heaven above all the other stars, the light

of which was inexpressible, while its novelty struck men with astonishment. (Ibid.)

The long Greek varies so slightly from the short Greek that the passage need not be repeated. Gnosticism pervades the whole chapter, of which the last part is missing in the Syriac.

But we now turn to a few of the passages in the Greek versions rebuking disbelief or denial of the birth, death, and resurrection of Jesus :

They also calumniate his being born of the Virgin; they are ashamed of his cross, they deny his passion, and they do not believe his resurrection. (Trallians vi.)

If any one confesses the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost, and praises the creation, but calls the incarnation merely an appearance, and is ashamed of the passion, such an one has denied the faith, not less than the Jews who killed Christ. (Philadelphians vi.)

And he suffered truly, even as also he truly raised up himself, not, as certain unbelievers maintain, that he only seemed to suffer. (Smyrneans ii.)

I have learned that certain of the ministers of Satan have wished to disturb you, some of them asserting that Jesus was born only in appearance, was crucified in appearance, and died in appearance. (Tarsians ii.)

He that rejects the incarnation and is ashamed of the cross for which I am in bonds, this man is Antichrist. (Antiochians v.)

Wherefore also he [Christ] works in some that they should deny the cross, be ashamed of the passion, call the death an appearance, mutilate and explain away the birth of the Virgin, and calumniate the human nature itself as being abominable. (Philippians iv.)

The last three quotations are from what are termed the "Spurious Epistles of Ignatius," but all undoubtedly belong to that category, except perchance some small portions of the Syriac version. The inquisitive reader is referred further to Magnesians xi, Smyrneans i, iii, iv, v, and Philippians iii, v, vii.

Whatever date may be assigned to these writings—whether at the beginning of the second century or much later, with additions in the third or fourth—they betray the existence of wide-spread Gnosticism and a prevailing disbelief in the existence of Jesus as a man in mortal flesh.

But coming down to Irenæus, the first publisher of the four gospels (A. D. 190), we find in his writings an unequivocal affirmation that Jesus Christ, instead of being a youth of thirty, was an old man, past fifty, at least, when he died. This

is equivalent to admitting that the story of the crucifixion under Pontius Pilate is a fiction—though Irenæus, instead of denying that story, as some have hastily inferred, maintains it throughout his writings. How he could have written such a stultifying argument and affirmation of fact as the following is a mystery :

Being thirty years old when he came to be baptized, and then possessing the full age of a master, he came to Jerusalem, so that he might be properly acknowledged by all as a master. For he did not seem one thing while he was another, as those affirm who describe him as being a man only in appearance; but what he was, that he also appeared to be. Being a master, therefore, he also possessed the age of a master, not despising or evading any condition of humanity nor setting aside in himself that law which he had appointed for the human race, but sanctifying every age, by that period corresponding to it which belonged to himself. For he came to save all through means of himself—all, I say, who through him are born to God—infants and children and boys and youths and old men. He therefore passed through every age, becoming an infant for infants, thus sanctifying infants; a child for children, thus sanctifying those who are of this age; being at the same time made to them an example of piety, righteousness, and submission: a youth for youths, thus becoming an example to youths, and thus sanctifying them for the Lord. So, likewise, he was an old man for old men, that he might be a perfect master for all, not merely as respects the setting forth of the truth, but also as regards age, sanctifying at the same time the aged also, and becoming an example to them likewise. Then at last he came on to death itself, that he might be the "first born from the dead, and that in all things he might have preëminence," the Prince of Life, existing before all and going before all.

They, however, that they might establish their false opinion regarding that which is written, "to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord," maintain that he preached for one year only, and then suffered in the twelfth month. [In speaking thus] they are forgetful of their own disadvantage, destroying his whole work and robbing him of that age which is both more necessary and more honorable than any other; that more advanced age of men, I mean, during which, also as a teacher, he excelled all others. For how could he have had disciples if he did not teach? And how could he have taught unless he had reached the age of a master? For when he came to be baptized he had not completed his thirtieth year, but was beginning to be about thirty years of age, (for thus Luke, who has mentioned his years, has expressed it, "Now Jesus was, as it were, beginning to be thirty years old," when he came to receive baptism); and [according to these men] he preached only one year, reckoning from his baptism. On completing his thirtieth year he suffered, being in fact still a young man, and who had by no means attained to advanced age. Now that the first stage of early life embraces thirty years, and that this extends onward to the fortieth year, every one will admit; but from the fortieth and fiftieth year a man begins to decline toward old age, which our Lord possessed, while he still fulfilled the office of a teacher, even as the gospel and all the elders

testify ; those who are conversant in Asia with John, the disciple of the Lord, [affirming] that John conveyed to them that information. And he [John] remained among them up to the times of Trajan. Some of them, moreover, saw not only John, but the other apostles also, and heard the very same account from them, and bear testimony as to the [validity of] the statement. (Agt. Herea, B. ii, ch. xxii, 4, 5.)

A little sum in arithmetic would have revealed to Irenæus how fatal his allegations were to the truth of the gospel story. If Jesus was about thirty years old in the fifteenth year of Tiberius (A. D. 29) as stated by Luke, and if he lived to be fifty or upwards, then of course his death must have been as late as A. D. 49, which would be the ninth year of Claudius, or twelve years after the death of Tiberius and the dismissal of Governor Pilate.

This fearful dogmatic blunder of Irenæus was strangely overlooked until Godfrey Higgins translated the passage in 1836. It now appears in the Ante-Nicene Christian Library, and how it can be harmonized with an honest belief in the gospel story passeth the understanding of Antichrist.

Perhaps in Father Irenæus we might justly claim the fulfilment of the prophecy of Paul, saying, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie." For we appeal to every rational reader whether we have not proved the gospel story to be a stupendous delusion, an audacious lie?

Nor is this a rash conclusion unsupported by competent authority. The learned German theologian, Dr. Strauss, in 1835, published a "Life of Jesus" for scholars, and in 1764 a new one for the people. At the close of the last work he sums up the result of his researches in these words:

I do not think the case is so bad as has lately been maintained, as that we cannot know for certain of any one of the texts which are put into the mouth of Jesus in the gospels, whether he uttered them or not. I believe that there are some which we may ascribe to Jesus with all that amount of probability beyond which we cannot generally go in historical matters; and I have endeavored above to explain the signs by which we may recognize such. But this probability approaching to certainty does not extend far; and, with the exception of the journey of Jesus to Jerusalem and his death, the facts and circumstances of his life are unfavorably situated. There is little of which we can say for certain that it took place; and of all to which the faith of the church especially attaches

itself, the miraculous and supernatural matter in the facts and destinies of Jesus, it is far more certain that it did not take place.

Mark the timid hope expressed by the author that *some* sayings ascribed to Jesus *may* have been uttered by him. But as to all the other historical matters, he confesses that they are "unfavorably situated" save the journey to Jerusalem and the crucifixion. It is amazing to us that the learned author should have singled out these two events as probably historical. The journey to Jerusalem, ending with a triumphal donkey ride, interpreted as a fulfilment of prophecy, is too absurd and foolish to be regarded as fact; and the crucifixion, as we have shown in chapters iv, v, and elsewhere, is a manifest fiction. But even if there be a vestige of historical truth in these two events, there is no proof that they took place in the days of Pontius Pilate."

From what is here seen it is very apparent that there are reasons for the gravest doubts of the authenticity of the gospel narratives upon which the Christian religion is founded. The story is so legendary and apocryphal that it is but natural that great doubts should exist of its truth and divine origin.

BOOK OF THE GENERATION OF JESUS.

The same author has added to his volume a curious, uncanonical, obscure, and unrecognized "gospel" or story bearing the Hebrew title of "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu"—the Book of the Generation of Jesus. This singular production had been alluded to in rather disparaging terms by Voltaire, Lardner, Taylor, and others, most of whom regarded it as spurious, and classed it with the many forged and spurious gospels which appeared in the first few Christian centuries. The Rev. S. Baring-Gould, in his "Lost and Hostile Gospels," published in London a few years ago, has two versions of this "hostile gospel," which he translated from the Hebrew, in which language it appears originally to have been written. Our friend "Antichrist," in his explorations among all the antique books and literature which bear upon the origin and early history of Christianity, was delighted to find a copy of

Wagenseil's *Tela Ignea Satanæ*, published two hundred years ago, where he found this legendary gospel in Hebrew, with what he terms a rough Latin translation. He lost no time in rendering the Latin into English, and the writer of these pages published it in "The Truth Seeker," in 1878, and afterward in pamphlet form by its regular Hebrew title, "Sepher Toldoth Jeshu: Book of the Generation of Jesus," the title page bearing this inscription: "First English translation of the ancient Jewish story of Jesus, who was born at Bethlehem about the year 106 B. C., being the son of a betrothed maiden, named Miriam [Mary], by Joseph Pandera. By the power of a charm stolen from the Holy of Holies, he cured lepers, raised the dead, and wrought other miracles. Wherefore he was arrested by the elders of Jerusalem, scourged, crowned with thorns, and, by order of the Sanhedrim, stoned to death and hanged on the day before the Passover and the Sabbath in the reign of Queen Alexandria, about the year 75 B. C."

The same work bears the startling and somewhat damaging evidence that Peter, bearing the name of Simon Kepha, and Paul, flourished before the middle of the first century B. C. According to this revelation the story of the origin of Christianity is set back one hundred years. It is, perhaps, not strange that in view of this the Christian writer, Dr. Lardner, should reject it upon the charge of being spurious, and a forgery of the fifteenth or sixteenth century. This somewhat reckless assertion was made with Wagenseil's work before him, containing another version in Latin of the same story, published in the thirteenth century, and numerous citations from the Talmud concerning the same Jeshu, who lived a hundred years before Pontius Pilate. "This is the book," says Antichrist, "which the Rev. John Pye Smith, in a controversy with Robert Taylor fifty years ago, triumphantly cited as a crowning proof of the existence of Jesus" (*Syntagma*, page 136).

It probably was a production of the Jews. This Voltaire admitted, but contended, nevertheless, that it was a forgery or a fabrication, gotten up for the purpose of casting contempt and ridicule on the birth, life, and death of Jesus

Christ. It should, however, rather be taken as confirmatory proof of the existence of Jesus in the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, and as giving a probable source of Christianity among the many sources that have been claimed by the numerous authorities.

The story or gospel, following the example of former translators of ancient scriptures, has been divided into chapters and verses, "translated out of the original tongues, and with the former translations diligently compared and revised."

The first of the four chapters of this "gospel" will be here given, that the reader may perceive its character and import:

1. In the year 671, of the fourth millenary [of the world], in the days of Jannous, the king, a great misfortune happened to the enemies of Israel.

2. There was a certain idle and worthless debauchee named Joseph Pandera, of the fallen tribe of Judah.

3. He was a man of fine figure and rare beauty, but spent his time in robbery and licentiousness. He lived at Bethlehem of Judea.

4. Near by there lived a widow, who had a daughter named Miriam, of whom mention is several times made in the Talmud as a dresser of women's hair.

5. This daughter was betrothed by her mother to a very chaste, gentle, and pious youth named Jochanan.

6. Now it happened that Joseph occasionally passed by Miriam's door and saw her. Then he began to have an unholy affection for her.

7. So he went to and fro about the place, and at length the mother said to him, What maketh thee so thin? He replied, I am madly in love with Miriam.

8. Then, said the mother, I would not deny thee the favor; see if she is willing, and do with her as thou please.

9. Obeying her counsel, Joseph Pandera went frequently by the house, but

did not find a suitable time until one Sabbath evening, when he happened to find her sitting before the door.

10. Then he went into the house with her, and both sat down in a dormitory near the door, for she thought he was her betrothed, Jochanan.

11. *Tum ea homine ait: Ne me attingito; in menstruis sum. Sed is morem illi non gerebat, cumque circa eam voluntati suæ obsequutus fuisset, in domum suam abiit.*

12. *Circa medium noctis iterum in eo exardescere desiderium malum. Ergo somno levatus ad domum Miriamis viam affectans, ad cellam se confert, factumque repetit.*

13. *Valde autem exhorruit puella, et quid hoc, ait, tibi vult, Domine, quod eadem nocte bis me convenisti? idque non passa sum ab eo inde tempore quo sponsam me tibi elegisti.*

14. *Verum is silens repetit, nec verbum ullum proloquitur. Ergo Miriam queri: Quousque tu peccato scelus addis? annon pridem tibi dixi esse me menstruata?*

15. *Verum ille non attendebat ad ejus verba, sed desiderio satisfaciebat. actum postea iter pergebat suum.*

16. After three months Jochanan was told that his betrothed was enciente.

17. In great agitation he went to his

preceptor, Simeon Ben Shetach, and, telling him about the matter, asked him what he ought to do.

18. The preceptor inquired, Dost thou suspect any one? Jochanan said, Nobody, except Joseph Pandera, who is a great debauchee, and liveth near her house.

19. The preceptor said, My son, take my advice, and keep silent; for if he hath been there he will surely go there again. Therefore, be wise, and get a witness, so that thou mayest fetch him up before the great Sanhedrim.

20. The young man went home, and was sorely troubled during the night. He thought to himself, When this thing becometh known the people will say it was my doing.

21. Therefore, to avoid the shame and disgrace he ran away to Babylon, and there took up his abode.

22. In due time Miriam brought forth a son, and named him Jehoshua, after her mother's brother.

23. She sent the boy to a teacher named Elchanan, with whom he made progress in learning, for his mind was very bright.

24. And it came to pass by and by that he met the senators of the Sanhedrim at Jerusalem.

25. It was then the custom that whoever met those senators should cover his head and bow down.

26. But this boy, as he walked past them, bared his head, and, touching his forehead, saluted the principal only.

27. Then all began to say, What impudence! probably he is a bastard. But one of them said, Indeed he is a bastard and the son of an adulteress.

28. Presently Simeon Ben Shetach said, I remember now that not many years ago my pupil, Jochanan, came to me and said,

29. Alas! what a shame and disgrace has happened to me! for Miriam, my betrothed, is enciente, not by me,

but by some one else. This is the son of that Miriam.

30. And when I inquired if he suspected any one, he said, Joseph Pandera, who was near neighbor of hers.

31. And soon afterward Jochanan went in shame to Babylon, where he dwelleth even now.

32. Then they all said, If these things are so, this boy is indeed a bastard, and the son of an adulteress.

33. Then they published him as such by the blowing of three hundred trumpets, declaring him not fit to come into the congregation, and called his name Jeshu, signifying that his name and memory deserved to perish.

34. When it became known that he was declared unworthy to be admitted into the congregation, Jeshu, with a sad heart, fled to upper Galilee, where he dwelt many years.

35. In those days there was a stone in the Temple, on which was inscribed the inexpressible name of God.

36. For when David laid the foundation he found a certain stone at the mouth of an abyss, on which the name was engraved, and taking it up he deposited it in the Holy of Holies.

37. But when the wise men feared that perchance studious youths might learn this name, and bring destruction upon the world (which calamity may God forbid!) they made by magic two brazen lions, and placed them at the entrance of the Holy of Holies, one on the right hand and the other on the left.

38. If, therefore, any one drew near, and learned the hidden name, as he went away the lions would roar, so that in his fright he would forget the name forever.

39. Now, when the report that Jeshu was a bastard had spread abroad, he left upper Galilee, and coming secretly to Jerusalem he went into the Temple, and there learned the sacred letters.

40. And when he had written the hidden name on a piece of parchment, and spoken it that he might feel no pain, he cut open his flesh and inclosed therein the mysterious parchment. Then having again pronounced the name, he closed up the flesh.

41. But to enter the temple it was necessary to use magic and incantations; otherwise how could the most holy priests, the descendants of Aaron, have allowed him to go therein?

42. Therefore it is manifest that Jeshu did all this by the art of magic and the power of an impure name.

43. As he was coming out of the door the lions roared, and he forgot the name.

44. So he went outside of the city, and having reopened his flesh, drew forth the writing, examined well the characters, and got full retention of the name.

45. Then he went to the place of his nativity [Bethlehem], and with a loud voice cried out,

46. Who are these bad men who report me to be a bastard and of impure birth? They are themselves bastards and impure.

47. Did not a virgin bear me? Did not my mother conceive me in the top of her head?

48. Indeed I am the son of God, and concerning me the prophet Esaias spoke, saying, Behold, a virgin shall conceive, etc.

49. Did I not form myself, and the heaven, earth, sea, and all things contained therein?

50. Then they all answered and said, Make known by some sign and show by a miracle that thou art God.

51. He, answering, said, Bring hither to me a dead man, and I will restore him to life.

52. The people made haste, and, having dug into a certain sepulcher, found there nothing but dry bones.

53. And when they told him that they had found only bones, he said, Bring them hither.

54. And when they were brought, he put all the bones together and covered them with skin, flesh, and nerves; so he that had been a dead man stood up on his feet alive.

55. The people seeing this, marvelled. Then he said, Do ye wonder at this? Bring hither a leper and I will cure him.

56. And when they had brought a leper he restored him to health in like manner through the Shem Hamphoras.

57. Which, when the people saw, they fell down and worshiped him, saying, Verily, thou art the Son of God.

58. And it came to pass, after the fifth day, that the dismal tidings were brought to Jerusalem, the most holy city, and there all the things were told which Jeshu had done.

59. Then the profligates rejoiced greatly; but the old men, the devout, and the wise wept bitterly; and in the greater and the lesser Sanhedrim there was sore lamentation.

60. At length they all resolved to send messengers to Jeshu, saying among themselves, It may be that by the help of the Lord we shall capture him, bring him to judgment, and condemn him to death.

61. Therefore they sent Ananias and Achasias, most honorable men of the lesser Sanhedrim, who went and fell down before Jeshu in adoration, thereby augmenting his wickedness.

62. Therefore, thinking that they were sincere, he received them with a smiling face and appointed them leaders of his wicked flock.

63. Then they thus began to appeal to him: Lo, the leading citizens of Jerusalem have sent us ambassadors to thee, praying that thou wouldst deign to come to them, for they have heard that thou art the Son of God.

64. Then said Jeshu, What they have heard is true, and lo! I will do all that ye ask, but upon this condition.

65. That all the senators of the greater and lesser Sanhedrim, and those also who have defamed my nativity, shall come forth and worship me, receiving me even as servants receive their lords.

66. The messengers, returning to Jerusalem, reported all that had been said.

67. The elders and devout men answered, We will do all that he asketh.

68. Therefore the men went again to Jeshu and declared that they would do whatever he desired. Then Jeshu said, I will go with you at once.

In the succeeding chapters is narrated how an ass was procured, upon which Jeshu rode into Jerusalem, where he announced himself as being the one of whom the prophet Zacharias had predicted. Thus outraging the religious prejudices of the leaders of the people, complaint was made to the queen, Helena, that Jeshu was a sorcerer. She ordered him to be brought before her. When in her presence, by the use of the charm which he possessed, he cured a leper in her sight, and restored a dead body to life. Upon seeing these remarkable works she refused to condemn Jeshu, and sent his accusers away in displeasure. They then conferred together as to what could be done to get Jeshu into their power, whereupon Judas arose and proposed to learn the secret charm by which Jeshu performed his wonderful works, thus enabling them to obtain power over him. He accordingly acquired the knowledge of the secret magic word which Jeshu used, and was by the use of it able to also perform miracles. Proclaiming Jeshu to be an impostor, Judas and Jeshu were both summoned before the queen. Jeshu, upon being called upon, began again to perform miracles. Judas then upbraided him, calling him the bastard son of an adulteress. Both claimed that the ancient prophets had foretold the works they would perform. Jeshu spoke the magic word, and there came a mighty wind, and he was lifted up between heaven and earth; whereupon Judas spake the same word, and he was also taken up and suspended in the air in the same manner, thus both soaring around above the earth. A contest between the two by wrestling took place in the air, in consequence of which Jeshu lost the power of the charm he possessed and they came to the earth. Jeshu had a band of disciples who adhered to him, but Judas belonged to the

stronger party, and they succeeded in arresting Jeshu upon his visiting Jerusalem, when upon being condemned he was stoned to death, after which his body was hung. He had previous to his death charmed the wood of all the trees; not one of them would sustain his body, whereupon Judas proposed to hang him on a huge cabbage stalk growing in his garden. This suggestion was complied with, after which Jeshu was buried, and his disciples visited his grave in the middle of the night and wept and mourned for him. Judas seeing this, took the body away and buried it again under a running stream in his own garden. The disciples of Jeshu, finding the body was taken away, declared that he had raised from the dead according to a prediction he had made previous to his execution. These things coming to the knowledge of the queen she declared to the leading men of the people that unless they produced the body of Jeshu she would cause them to be put to death. They grieved greatly at the sad turn things had taken, and they mourned exceedingly. But Judas removed their grief by producing the body of Jeshu, his enemies renewing the charge of sorcery which they had made against him previous to his death.

In the fourth chapter is related the bitter quarrels and contentions which existed between the Nazarenes and Judeans, two divisions of the Jews, which ended in their killing each other when they met, until many were put to death. A portion of the people retained faith in Jeshu, and they remembered and repeated the doctrines which he had taught, and many anounced themselves as his apostles. Much grieving was indulged in on the part of the leaders of the people at the following which the dead Jeshu still had. At length a certain aged man named Simeon Kepha—Simon Cephas—(Peter) proposed to exterminate the wickedness and heresy among the people. He went into the sanctuary of the temple and wrote out the almighty name by which Jeshu had performed his miracles, and cut his flesh with a knife. He had learned the secret charm and assured the disciples of Jeshu that he had been sent to them by their late master. Raising his voice he cried aloud to them, "Whosoever believeth in Jeshu let him come unto me, for I am sent by him." A multitude soon

gathered round him and they demanded of him proofs that he was sent by Jeshu. They demanded the same kind of miracles which their master had performed. In compliance with this he healed lepers and raised the dead so that they stood upon their feet. This was entirely satisfactory, and the disciples of Jeshu acknowledged that Simeon Kepha had been sent by their master, and they avowed themselves ready to obey all his commands. After giving them various instructions as to their religious duties, he directed that a tower be built for him to sit upon till the day of his death. He was placed upon this when built, and he was fed with miserable bread and scanty water for six years, when he died, after having spent much of the time in writing hymns and moral precepts, which were distributed among the people of the nation.

Those who wish to read this disputed gospel entire can easily obtain "Toldoth Jeshu" in pamphlet form, or, what would be better, the "Revelations of Antichrist," both of which contain it in full, and both of which are published by the writer of these pages.

It of course has been a question of much debate whether the Jeshu of the foregoing narrative was the Jesus of the gospel story. It is but natural that Christian writers should deny that he was, and that they should insist that the book was a production of a comparatively late century. As, however, the story appears in the Talmud, which was in part written before the Christian era and in part within one or two centuries after, it is a pretty strong proof that, to say the least, it is nearly as old as Christianity. That it may have been changed, modified, and interpolated, as all the other gospels, canonical or otherwise, have been, there is not much doubt. It is certainly worthy of being classed with the other apocryphal gospels, which like those admitted in the canon, all lack confirmation as to their genuineness and credibility. As none are susceptible of proof, the reader has the privilege of placing just as much confidence in them as he pleases, and no more. Like the poems relating to Prometheus, Hercules, Mercury, Apollo, Bacchus, and Thor, they may be believed if the reader is credulous, or doubted if he is not ready to accept all he reads.

TESTIMONY OF CELSUS.

Celsus was an able scholar for the age of the world in which he lived. He was one of the first four controversial opponents of Christianity. He wrote somewhat extensively, but his writings have been destroyed by the Christians, who were very careful to put out of existence everything he penned damaging to the Christian institution. All that comes down to us is what is quoted from him by the Christian Father Origen, who laboriously attempted to refute what Celsus had written. The early Christians found it much easier to burn the incisive arguments and statements of Celsus than to disprove them. We have, then, to thank Origen for the little of the writings of Celsus which he quoted and were thus permitted to come down to us.

The Christian Father attempted to make out that Celsus was an Epicurean, undoubtedly because a prejudice had been aroused even among the heathen against that school of philosophy, which denied or left as open questions the existence of a God, providence, and the eternity of the soul. In the early part of his writings he said he had heard there had existed two Epicureans of the name of Celsus, one who lived in the reign of Nero (A. D. 68), the other under Hadrian (A. D. 138). The latter is the one he attempted to refute. It, however, is clear, from the passages of Celsus, quoted by Origen, that this antagonist was no disciple of Epicurus, but rather belonged to the school of Eclectics, which founded its philosophy on the teachings of Plato, with some from other directions. Origen was obliged to admit in several passages of his treatise that the views of Celsus were not Epicurean, but Platonic; but still he pretended that Celsus played the hypocrite and attempted to disguise his Epicureanism under the cover of Platonism. The Christian Fathers, when in controversy with heathen opponents, not unfrequently misrepresented their antagonists in this way.

The place and date of the birth of Celsus are not known, but it is believed, as he mentioned the Marcionites, who arose in A. D. 142, and the Marcellians, that he lived in the beginning of the last half of the second century. In two places Celsus

made the statement that the Christians spread their doctrine secretly, and from this fact the date of his book has been placed in the year 176.

It is pretty easy to form a conception of the religious views of Celsus by the quotations from him which Origen has transmitted to us; here is a sentence, "If the Christians only honored one God, then the weapons of their controversy with others would not be so weak; but they show to a man, who appeared not long ago, an exaggerated honor, and are of opinion that they are not offending the Godhead when they show to one of his servants the same reverence that they pay to God himself." He accepted the views of Plato, one only, eternal, spiritual God, who cannot be brought into impure matter, the world. He held that all that concerned the world was left to the dispensation of inferior spirits, which were the gods of the heathen. The welfare of mankind is at the disposal of these inferior gods, and men therefore do well to honor them in moderation; but the human soul is called to escape the chains of matter and strain after perfect union with purity, and this can only be done by meditation on the One Supreme Almighty God. He asserted, "God has not made man in his image, as Christians affirm, for God has not either the appearance of a man nor indeed any visible form." In the fourth book he remarks, in opposition to the Christian doctrine of the incarnation, thus: "I will appeal to that which has been held true in all ages—that God is good, beautiful, blessed, and possesses in himself all perfections. If he came down among men he must have altered his nature; from a good God he must have become bad; from beautiful, ugly; from blessed, unhappy; and his perfect being would have become one of his perfections. Who can tolerate such a change? Only transitory things alter their conditions; the intransitory remain ever the same. Therefore it is impossible to conceive that God can have been transformed in such a manner."

It is a very noticeable fact that Celsus, living in the middle of the second century, able to make inquiries of aged Jews whose lives had extended from the first century, should have been able to have found out nothing, or next to nothing, about

Jesus and his disciples except from certain spurious gospel stories, not one of which can be shown to have been written by any known person, not one of which was written by the person whose name has been attached to it, and not one of which is genuine and true. This is very strong proof that no traditions concerning Jesus had been preserved by the Jews apart from those contained in the gospels, whether styled canonical or apocryphal.

Origen's answer to Celsus is comprised in eight books. In the first book a Jew speaks, who is introduced to Celsus as addressing Jesus himself. In the second book this Jew addresses those of his fellow-countrymen who have embraced Christianity. In the remaining six books Celsus speaks for himself. Origen extracted only short passages from the work of Celsus, and then labored to demolish the arguments of the antagonist of Christianity in the best way he could.

It is not proposed to introduce here at any length either the arguments of Celsus or the counter-arguments of Origen. The main object is to call attention to the traditions and reports detailed to Celsus, which he reproduced. That Celsus was in communication with Jews when he wrote the first two books is obvious, and the only circumstances he relates which had reference to Jesus he derived from his Jewish informants. "The Jew [whom Celsus introduces] addresses Jesus and finds much fault. In the first place he charges him with having falsely proclaimed himself to be the son of a virgin; afterward he says that Jesus was born in a poor Jewish village, and that his mother was a poor woman of the country, who supported herself by spinning and needlework; that she was cast off by her betrothed, a carpenter; and after she was thus rejected by her husband she wandered about in disgrace and misery till she secretly gave birth to Jesus. Jesus himself was obliged, from poverty and necessity, to go down as servant into Egypt, where he learned some of the secret sciences which are in high honor among the Egyptians; and he placed such confidence in those sciences that on his return to his native land he gave himself out to be a god."

Origen adds, "The carpenter [as the Jew of Celsus declares] who was betrothed to Mary, put the mother of Jesus from

him because she had broken faith with him, in favor of a soldier named Panthera."

Again: "Celsus relates from the Gospel of Matthew the flight of Christ into Egypt, but he denies all that is marvelous and supernatural in it, especially that an angel should have appeared to Joseph and ordered him to escape. Instead of seeking whether the departure of Jesus from Judea and his residence in Egypt had not some spiritual meaning, he has made up a fable concerning it. He admits, indeed, that Jesus may have wrought the miracles which attracted such a multitude of people to him, and induced them to follow him as the Messiah; but he pretends that these miracles were wrought, not by virtue of divine power, but of his magical knowledge. Jesus, says he, had a bad education; later he went into Egypt and passed into service there, and then learned some wonderful arts. When he came back to his fatherland, on account of these arts, he gave himself out to be a god."

"The Jew brought forward by Celsus goes on to say, 'I could relate many things more concerning Jesus, all of which are true, but which have quite a different character from what his disciples relate touching him; but I will not now bring them forward.' " "And what are these facts," answers Origen, "which are not in agreement with the narratives of the evangelists, and which the Jew refrains from mentioning? Unquestionably he is using only a rhetorical expression; he pretends that he has in store abundance of munitions of war to discharge against Jesus and his doctrine, but in fact he knows nothing which can deceive the hearer with the appearance of truth, except those particulars which he has culled from the gospels themselves" (*Contra. Cels. lib. 11*).

This, it must be seen—as Baring-Gould says—is most important evidence of the utter ignorance of the Jews in the second century of all that related to the history of Jesus. Justus and Josephus had been silent. There was no written narrative to which the Jew might turn for information; his traditions were silent. The fall of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews had broken the thread of their recollections.

There is no question but what Celsus utterly despised the system of Christianity and feeble legendary foundation upon

which it was based. He used this language: "They are forever repeating, 'Do not examine, only believe, and thy faith will make thee blessed. Wisdom is a bad thing in life; foolishness is to be preferred.'"

It need not be disguised that in the time of Celsus there was a story or tradition, to some extent current, that Jesus was the result of an illicit intercourse between the wife of the carpenter Joseph and a Roman soldier named Panthera, who served in the fourteenth legion; and this is somewhat confirmed by the fact that the Christian writer St. Epiphanius, who wrote against heresies in the fourth century, refers to the tradition, and actually mentioned Jacob, called Panthera, in the pedigree of Jesus. (*Adv. Hær*, lib. iii; *Hær*, lviii, 7). This is conclusive that the stories of Panthera had made such an impression that Christian writers were forced to take notice of them.

In connection it may be mentioned that Celsus is quoted by Origen as jeering at the ignorance of Christian teachers: "You may see weavers, tailors, fullers, and the most illiterate and rustic fellows, who dare not speak a word before wise men, when they can get a company of children and silly women together set up to teach strange paradoxes among them." The words ascribed to Jesus, "I thank thee, O Father, that thou hast concealed these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them unto babes," Celsus construed in this way: "This is one of their rules, Let no man that is learned, wise, or prudent come among us; but if he be unlearned, or a child, or an idiot, let him freely come. So they freely declare that none but the ignorant and those devoid of understanding, slaves, women, and children, are fit disciples for the God they worship."

The lesson we learn from the learned scholar and able unbeliever, Celsus, is that at his time there was but little known about the history of Jesus, and that what was in circulation were mythical legends and traditions as found in the gospels then in existence, not one of which, however, was admitted into the New Testament canon. It is certainly to be regretted that the origin and early history of a system of religion upon which we are solemnly assured the salvation of

the world depends should be shrouded in such a misty cloud of legends, traditions, doubt, and uncertainty.

JOSEPHUS AND OTHER CONTEMPORARY WRITERS.

It is most unfortunate for the character and reliability of Christianity and its reputed founder that there is little or no corroborative evidence from the writers who flourished at the time Jesus is said to have made his advent into the world and soon after. It is unfortunate that Philo, Josephus, and Justus should be so silent with regard to him. If it was true that Jesus existed in Palestine at the time he is said to have lived and taught there; if it is true that he performed such wonderful works as are related of him, and that he drew a large following of people after him, it is singular that such writers as those named should have known nothing of it all, or should have said nothing of it when writing the history of the events that transpired in that period. The Rev. S. Baring-Gould, in his "Lost and Hostile Gospels," takes a clear view of this want of corroborative proof. He thus expresses himself: "It is somewhat remarkable that no contemporary, or even early life of our Lord exists, except from the pens of Christian writers. That we have none by Greek or Roman writers is, perhaps, not to be wondered at; but it is singular that neither Philo, Josephus, nor Justus of Tiberias, should ever have alluded to Christ or to primitive Christianity. Philo was born at Alexandria about twenty years before Christ. In the year A. D. 40 he was sent by the Alexandrian Jews on a mission to Caligula to entreat the emperor not to put into force his order that his statue should be erected in the temple of Jerusalem and in all the synagogues of the Jews. Philo was a Pharisee. He traveled in Palestine, and speaks of the Essenes he saw there; but he says not a word about Jesus Christ and his followers. It is possible that he may have heard of the new sect, but he concluded it was but insignificant and consisted of the disciples, poor and ignorant, of a Galilean rabbi, whose doctrines he, perhaps, did not stay

to inquire into, and supposed they did not differ fundamentally from the traditional teaching of the rabbis of his day.

“Flavius Josephus was born A. D. 37, consequently only four years after the death of our Lord, at Jerusalem. Till the age of twenty-nine he lived in Jerusalem, and had, therefore, plenty of opportunity of learning about Christ and early Christianity. In 67 Josephus became governor of Galilee, on the occasion of the Jewish insurrection against the Roman domination. After the fall of Jerusalem he passed into the service of Titus, went to Rome, where he rose to honor in the house of Vespasian and of Titus, A. D. 81. The year of his death is not known. He was alive in A. D. 93, for his biography is carried down to that date. Josephus wrote at Rome his ‘History of the Jewish War,’ in seven books, in his own Aramaic language. This he finished in the year A. D. 75, and then translated it into Greek. On the completion of this work he wrote his ‘Jewish Antiquities,’ a history of the Jews, in twenty books, from the beginning of the world to the twelfth year of the reign of Nero, A. D. 66. He completed this work in the year A. D. 93, concluding it with a biography of himself. He also wrote a book against Apion on the antiquity of the Jewish people. A book in praise of the Maccabees has been attributed to him without justice. In the first of these works, the larger of the two, the ‘History of the Jewish War,’ he treats of the very period when our Lord lived, and in it he makes no mention of him. But in the shorter work, the ‘Jewish Antiquities,’ in which he goes over briefly the same period of time treated of at length in the other work, we find this passage:

“‘At this time lived Jesus, a wise man [if indeed he ought to be called a man], for he performed wonderful works [he was a teacher of men who received the truth with gladness]; and he drew to him many Jews and also many Greeks. [This was the Christ.] But when Pilate, at the instigation of our chiefs, had condemned him to crucifixion, they who at first loved him did not cease [for he appeared to them on the third day again, for the divine prophets had foretold this, together with many other wonderful things concerning him], and even

to this time the community of Christians called after him continues to exist.'

"That this passage is spurious has been almost universally acknowledged. One may be accused perhaps of killing dead birds, if one again examines and discredits the passage; but as the silence of Josephus on the subject which we are treating is a point on which it will be necessary to insist, we cannot omit as brief a discussion as possible of the celebrated passage.

"This passage is first quoted by Eusebius (fl. A. D. 315) in two places (Hist. Eccl. lib. i., c. xi.; Demonst. Evang. lib. iii.); but it was unknown to Justin Martyr (fl. A. D. 140), Clement of Alexandria (fl. A. D. 192), Tertullian (fl. A. D. 193), and Origen (fl. A. D. 230). Such a testimony would certainly have been produced by Justin in his apology or in his controversy with Trypho the Jew, had it existed in the copies of Josephus at his time. The silence of Origen is still more significant. Celsus, in his book against Christianity, introduces a Jew. Origen attacks the arguments of Celsus and his Jew. He could not have failed to quote the words of Josephus, whose writings he knew, had the passage existed in the genuine text. He indeed distinctly affirms that Josephus did not believe in Christ (Contr. Cels., i).

"Again, the paragraph interrupts the chain of ideas in the original text. Before this passage comes an account of how Pilate, seeing there was a want of pure drinking water in Jerusalem, conducted a stream into the city from a spring two hundred stadia distant, and ordered that the cost should be defrayed out of the treasury of the Temple. This occasioned a riot. Pilate disguised Roman soldiers as Jews, with swords under their cloaks, and sent them among the rabble, with orders to arrest the ringleaders. This was done. The Jews, finding themselves set upon by other Jews, fell into confusion. One Jew attacked another, and the whole company of rioters melted away. 'And in this manner,' says Josephus, 'was this insurrection suppressed.' Then follows the paragraph about Jesus, beginning, 'At this time lived Jesus, a wise man, if indeed one ought to call him a man,' etc.; and the passage is immediately followed by, 'About

this time another misfortune threw the Jews into disturbance, and in Rome an event happened in the temple of Isis which produced great scandal.' And then he tells an indelicate story of religious deception which need not be repeated here. The misfortune which befel the Jews was, as he afterward relates, that Tiberius drove them out of Rome. The reason of this was, he says, that a noble Roman lady, who had become a proselyte, had sent gold and purple to the temple at Jerusalem. But this reason is not sufficient. It is clear from what precedes—a story of a sacerdotal fraud—that there was some connection between the incidents in the mind of Josephus. Probably the Jews had been guilty of religious deceptions in Rome, and had made a business of performing cures and expelling demons with talismans and incantations, and for this had obtained rich payment.

"From the connection that exists between the passage about the 'other misfortune which befel the Jews,' and the former one about the riot suppressed by Pilate, it appears evident that the whole of the paragraph concerning our Lord is an interpolation. That Josephus could not have written the passage as it stands is clear enough, for only a Christian would speak of Jesus in the terms employed. Josephus was a Pharisee and a Jewish priest. He shows in all his writings that he believes in Judaism.

"It has been suggested that Josephus may have written about Christ as in the passage quoted, but that the portions within brackets are the interpolations of a Christian copyist. But when these portions within brackets are removed, the passage loses all its interest, and is dry statement, utterly unlike the sort of notice Josephus would have been likely to insert. He gives color to his narratives; his incidents are always sketched with vigor. This account would be meagre beside those of the riot of the Jews and the rascality of the priests of Isis. Josephus asserts, moreover, that in his time there were four sects among the Jews—the Pharisees, the Sadducees, the Essenes, and the sect of Judas of Gamala. He gives tolerably copious particulars about these sects and their teachings, but of the Christian sect he says not a word. Had he wished to write about it, he would have given full

details, likely to interest his readers and not have dismissed the subject in a couple of lines.

"It was, perhaps, felt by the early Christians that the silence of Josephus—so famous a historian and a Jew—on the life, miracles, and death of the founder of Christianity, was extremely inconvenient; the fact could not fail to be noticed by their adversaries. Some Christian transcriber may have argued either Josephus knew nothing of the miracles performed by Christ—in which case he is a weighty testimony against them—or he must have heard of Jesus, but not have deemed his acts, as they were related to him, of sufficient importance to find a place in his history. Arguing thus, the copyist took the opportunity of rectifying the omission written from the standpoint of a Pharisee, and therefore designating the Lord as merely a wise man.

"It is curious to note the use made of the interpolation now found in the text. Eusebius, after quoting it, says: 'When such testimony as this is transmitted to us by a historian who sprang from the Hebrews themselves respecting the Savior, what subterfuge can be left them to prevent them from being covered with confusion?'"

The reverend author continues his arguments in a similar vein, showing conclusively that the spurious paragraph quoted was never written by the Jewish historian. These would doubtless interest the reader, but the copious extracts already given, coupled with want of space, precludes further quotations from this learned author. He arrived at the same conclusion touching the spurious paragraph that many other eminent, learned, and even Christian writers have. Dr. Lardner, one of the ablest Christian writers, conclusively proves that Josephus was not the author of the paragraph, and exposes the subterfuge of the party or parties who dishonestly attempted to make the Jewish historian affirm that such a person as Jesus had an actual existence. Many writers ascribe the fraud to Eusebius. Whether he was the guilty party or not, he seems to have been the first to call attention to the passage; and according to the testimony of Mosheim—who certainly must be admitted to be a competent judge—Eusebius justified the policy of using fraud, if thereby the inter-

ests of the church could be promoted. In his "Ecclesiastical History," page 70, he says: "That it was not only lawful but commendable to deceive and lie for the sake of truth and piety early spread among the Christians of the second century." The Fathers easily fell into the practice of pious fraud agreeable to the pattern of the Romish and other pagan priests who preceded them. Paul also inculcated the commendable nature of this species of piety. (See Romans iii. 7.) There is scarcely a doubt that Eusebius was capable of being the author of the interpolated passage.

Contemporary with Josephus lived another Jewish historian, Justus of Tiberias, whose name has already been mentioned. Josephus speaks of him, and blames him for not having published his "History of the Wars of the Jews" during the life of Vespasian and Titus. St. Jerome also mentions Justus, and includes him in his catalogue of ecclesiastical writers; and Stephen of Byzantium mentions him. His books are believed to be lost; but Photius had read his History, and expressed surprise to find that Justus made no mention whatever of Christ. Photius expressed himself in this way: "This Jewish historian does not make the smallest mention of the appearance of Christ, and says nothing whatever of his deeds and miracles" (Bibliothec. cod. 33). This amounts to almost positive proof that Jesus had not a real existence, or that he was so obscure and unknown as not to be talked about, and his career not an incident worthy of mention.

In the "Antiquities" of Josephus (lib. xx, c. ix) there is one other mention made of the name of Jesus in connection with the account given of the putting to death of James, the brother of him who is called Christ, and some others, under Ananus, the high-priest. Baring-Gould says: "This passage is also open to objection. According to Hegesippus, a Jewish Christian, who wrote a history of the church about the year A. D. 170, of which fragments have been preserved by Eusebius, St. James was killed in a tumult, not by sentence of a court. He relates that James, the brother of Jesus, was thrown down from a wing of the temple, stoned, and finally dispatched with a fuller's club. Clement of Alexandria con-

firms this, and is quoted by Eusebius accordingly. Eusebius quotes the passage from Josephus without noticing that the two accounts do not agree. According to the statement of Hegesippus, St. James suffered alone; according to that of Josephus, several other victims to the anger or zeal of Ananus perished with him."

"It appears that some of the copies of Josephus were tampered with by copyists, for Theophylact says, 'The wrath of God fell on them (the Jews) when their city was taken, and Josephus testifies that these things happened to them on account of the death of Jesus.' But Origen, speaking of Josephus, says, 'This writer, though he did not believe in Jesus to be the Christ, inquiring into the cause of the overthrow of Jerusalem and the demolition of the temple, . . . says, "These things befel the Jews in vindication of James, called the Just, who was the brother of Jesus, called the Christ, forasmuch as they killed him who was a most righteous man"' (Contra Cels. i, 47). Josephus, as we have seen, says nothing of the sort; consequently Origen must have quoted from an interpolated copy. And this interpolation suffered further alteration, by a later hand, by the substitution of the name of Jesus for that of James."

"It is therefore by no means unlikely that the name of James, the Lord's brother, may have been inserted in the account of the high-handed dealing of Ananus in place of another name" (Lost and Hostile Gospels). Few things were more common than these interpolations and changes by scribes and interested parties in the second and third centuries, anxious to show that Jesus had been mentioned by Josephus and other historians. The utter improbability that Josephus, an orthodox Jew, should speak of Jesus being the Messiah or Christ must be apparent to the most common observer. If, then, one or two such passages are found, the rational conclusion to be arrived at is that they were nothing but specimens of the interpolations common to that time.

This, then, is all the proof that is found in the writings of the contemporary historians and writers of the time—in the first century—save, perhaps, the account attributed to Celsus, already alluded to, to show that there was such a person as

Jesus—nothing else save the disjointed, imperfect, and conflicting narratives ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John (with numerous conceded *spurious* gospels), though by whom written, where, or when, whether in the first or second century, no man knows. As, however, no proof exists that they were in existence before the latter part of the second century the conclusion is obligatory that they were not written till about that time. Candor and truth also compel us to admit that the proof that Jesus had a real personal existence is very apocryphal and doubtful; and it is indeed singular how an edifice so stately as Christianity should have been built upon a foundation so defective and uncertain.

ADMISSIONS BY EARLY AND EMINENT CHRISTIAN WRITERS.

When we consider the conspicuous place the name of Jesus Christ has occupied in the history of the Western world, it is quite sufficient to startle the majority of persons that there is not a particle of satisfactory and conclusive evidence to show that such a person as Jesus of Nazareth ever had an existence, but such is the fact. Prof. John Fiske remarks that while Jesus of dogma is the best known, the Jesus of history is the least known of all eminent names in history. Numerous volumes have been written under the titles of "Life of Jesus" and "Life of Christ," but they are no more than romantic paraphrases of the gospels; and the gospels, as we have seen, and as can much farther be elucidated, are in no sense historical records. We have nothing certain as to when, where, or by whom they were written.

These gospels, and the stories built upon them, that have so many thousands of times been repeated, have been the means of preventing the name of Jesus from falling into oblivion. Though they were not written nor dictated by him; though not a line claimed to be written by him has come down to us, these gospels are supposed to embody his doctrines and teachings, and are also supposed to contain the will of God, communicated from God to man through him, to be the guide and government of the world—a mere

dogmatic fiction, introduced in order to maintain the superhuman morality of the gospels. Now, if it can be shown that this claim has no foundation, then it is plain that the Jesus of dogma must follow the Jesus of history.

The early Christian Fathers made strong efforts to show that there had been such a personage, but these were insufficient to convince thousands who have studiously followed them. During the first three centuries there appeared a great number of anonymous narratives regarding this supposed person, detailing the events of his life, his sayings and doings. Many of these were promulgated by the various sects which prevailed in those times, and were each urged with more or less earnestness.

Bishop Faustus (Faust. Lib. 2,) in speaking of these early writers, correctly says: "It is an undoubted fact that the New Testament was not written by Christ himself nor by his apostles, but a long while after their time by some unknown persons, who, lest they should not be credited when they wrote of affairs they were little acquainted with, affixed to their works the names of apostles, or of such as were supposed to have been their companions, and said they were written according to them."

As appears by various authorities, there were in the early centuries over two hundred different gospels and epistles, all differing from each other, and nearly all claiming to give a true account of this person, Jesus.

All these various gospels possessed the unsatisfactory characteristic of not giving the authors' names or dates or any authentication for the improbable stories they narrated. They were not written in the language of the country where the events were said to have occurred, but in obscure and corrupt Greek—"a barbarous idiom," as Campbell calls it, showing at least that the writers were not inspired with the gift of tongues. In speaking of the character of the language in which the gospels were written, Bishop Middleton, in his "Essay on the Gift of Tongues," says: "The scripture Greek is utterly rude and barbarous, and abounds with every fault that can possibly deform language; whereas we should naturally expect to find an 'inspired language,' pure, clear;

noble, and affecting, even beyond the course of common speech, since nothing can come from God but what is perfect in its kind. In short, we should expect the purity of Plato and the eloquence of Cicero."

The four gospels which the Council of Laodicea, in 363, decided by vote to be true and reliable, came far from agreeing in their different versions. The printing-press was unknown in those days, and the only way of multiplying copies of the gospels and epistles was with the pen, and this principally by monks, and each copyist seemed to exercise the right to change the reading as he chose; at all events, there was nothing to prevent his doing so, and the great number of changes and alterations—amounting in the aggregate to many thousands—conclusively show that the opportunities for changing were extensively improved. Very few of these copies were made from the originals. They were simply copies of copies, and there are now in existence no copies made nearer the time of Jesus than five hundred years.

The learned Casaubon, in deploring the great lack of authenticity and beauty of the many gospels, gave this language: "It greatly affects me to see how many there were in the earliest times of the church who considered it a holy task to lend to heavenly truth the help of their own inventions, in order that the New Revelation might be more readily admitted by the wise among the Gentiles. These officious lies, they declared, were devised for a good end. From this source sprang up innumerable books, published under the name of the Lord Jesus Christ."

It is supposed by some that Matthew's gospel was written first, and that Mark and Luke were copied more or less from it—in some instances almost verbatim. They seem, however, to have been somewhat uncertain as to Matthew's credibility, for they omitted several of the most wonderful parts, and rejected many of his most astonishing miracles.

The first three gospels agree tolerably well, however, in the style of the discourses attributed to Jesus, which are parables and short pithy sayings, and they represent him as beginning his career in Galilee, proceeding to Jerusalem, and suffering there. Their chief topics are the fall of Jerusalem and the

approach of the kingdom of heaven. The fourth gospel, judged to have been written late in the second century, and strongly impregnated with the Platonic philosophy, is of a very different character. The discourses of Jesus in this gospel are long controversial orations, and without parables. He is made to journey from Galilee to Jerusalem and back again many times; the kingdom of heaven is a secondary matter, and the fall of Jerusalem never alluded to; several new topics are introduced, as the "Incarnation of the Word," or Plato's *Logos*, applied to Jesus; his coming down from heaven, his relation to the Father, the promise of the Comforter, and an entire new set of miracles.

Reber, in his "Christ of Paul," shows pretty conclusively that John, the son of Zebedee, the accredited author of the fourth gospel, was never in Asia Minor, and makes out a strong case that he was not the writer of the book bearing his name. The same conclusion, in fact, was arrived at by Strauss, Prof. Newman, Scott, and other able writers, as we may see further along. The fourth gospel has been attributed to Irenæus, but this hypothesis has again been put aside; but that it was written at a comparatively late date, and by an unknown person, is a conclusion pretty definitely arrived at.

We will not take the space here to point out the numerous discrepancies and disagreements between the four gospels. That has been pretty fully done in the article on the Bible in Vol. I., to which the reader will please refer in connection with what is said here. The fact that the Bible revisers, who are at the present time devoting their attention to the gospels, find such a large number of errors in them, and that they have decided to expurgate certain passages and verses from them, is, to say the least, a damaging argument against their authenticity and divine origin.

An able English writer, in referring to the reliability of the gospels, thus expresses himself: "The ordinary notion that the four gospels were written by the persons whose names they bear has no foundation in truth, and has now been given up by all Christian writers. And here the admission of Bishop Faustus is conclusive, and shows that the Christian world has

been all along kept in most strange and suspicious ignorance on this subject."

Upon the same subject the Rev. E. Evanson thus descants: "Although the gospels are to be received as the compositions of the Jews, contemporaneous and even witnesses of the scenes and actions they describe, yet their compositions do nevertheless betray so great a degree of ignorance of the geography, statistics, and circumstances of Judea at the time supposed, as to put it beyond all question that the writers were neither witnesses nor contemporaries--neither Jews nor inhabitants of Judea."

The eminent and learned French writer Jacolliot (*Bible in India*, p. 289), in considering the credibility of the story of Jesus, uses the following language: "The life of the great Christian philosopher, as transmitted to us by the evangelists, his apostles, is but a tissue of apocryphal inventions, destined to strike the popular imagination and solidly to establish the basis of their new religion. It must be admitted, however, that the field was wonderfully prepared, and that these men had little difficulty in finding adepts to place fortune and life at the service of reform.

"Everywhere paganism was in its last throes: Jupiter, maugre his altars, had no longer believers; Pythagoras, Aristotle, Socrates, and Plato had long evicted him from their conscience. Cicero wondered that two priests could look at each other without laughing. For two ages past Pyrrho, Cimon, Sextus, Empiricus, Enesidemus, no longer believed in anything. Lucretius had just written his book on nature, and all the great spirits of the age of Augustus, too corrupt to return to simple principles and primordial lights, but staunch to reason, had reached the most perfect skepticism--leading a life of pleasure midst oblivion of God and of the future destinies of man.

"On another side, these old and decaying theologies had left in the spirit of the multitude the idea of a Redeemer, which ancient India had bequeathed to all the nations; and the wearied people waited for something new to replace their extinct beliefs, to nourish their energy, paralyzed by doubt, and in need of hope. It was then that a poor Jew, though

born in the lowest class of the people, did not fear, after devoting fifteen years of his life to study and meditation, to attempt regeneration of this epoch of decrepitude and of materialism."

The following opinions of the Christian fathers are selected from Alberger's "Antiquity of Christianity:"

The origin of Christianity is involved in so much obscurity that the most distinguished Fathers of the primitive church explicitly declared that it had existed from time immemorial.

1. Justin Martyr, our first authority on this point, was born in Samaria, of Grecian parents, about A. D. 90, and died in 165. After studying in the schools of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, and Zeno, he was accosted by an angel in the disguise of an old man, who persuaded him to become a Christian. In an "Apology," addressed to Antoninus Pius, he says:

"If, then, we hold some opinions near akin to those of the poets and philosophers in most repute among you, why are we thus unjustly hated? for in saying that all things were made in this beautiful manner by God, what do we seem to say more than Plato? When we teach a general conflagration, what do we teach more than the Stoics? By opposing the work of men's hands, we concur with Meander, the comedian; and by declaring the Logos—the first begotten of God, our Master Jesus Christ—to be born of a virgin, without any human mixture, to be crucified and dead, and to have risen again and ascended into heaven, we say no more in this than what you say of those whom you style the sons of Jove. For you need not be told what number of sons the writers most in vogue among you assign to Jove. There is Mercury, Jove's interpreter, in imitation of the Logos, in worship among you. There is Æsculapius, the physician, smitten by a thunderbolt, and after that ascending into heaven. There is Bacchus, torn to pieces, and Hercules burned to get rid of his pains. There is Castor and Pollux, the sons of Jove by Leda, and Perseus by Danæ. Not to mention others, I would fain know why you always deify departed emperors, and have a fellow at hand to make affidavit that he saw Cæsar ascend to heaven from the funeral pile. As to the son of God,

called Jesus, should we allow him to be no more than man, yet the title of the Son of God is very justifiable on account of his wisdom, considering you have your Mercury in worship, under the title of the Word and Messenger of God. As to the objection of our Jesus being crucified, I say that suffering was common to all the aforementioned sons of Jove, but only they suffered another kind of death. As to his being born of a virgin, you have your Perseus to balance that; as to his curing the lame, the paralytic, and such as were cripple from their birth, this is little more than what you say of your *Æsculapius*."

Again, the same Christian apologist says: "It having reached the devil's ears that the prophets had foretold that Christ would come for the purpose of tormenting the wicked in fire, set the heathen poets to bring forward a great many who should be called the sons of Jove. The devil laying his scheme in this to get men to imagine that the true history of Christ was of the same character as those prodigious fables" (Apolog. 3).

2. Tertullian, a Latin church Father, who was born at Carthage, in Africa, of pagan parents, in A. D. 150, and who became a doctor of the church of his native city in 195, is the next authority which we shall adduce. He was a priest, a teacher of rhetoric, and a popular declaimer. In an Apology for the Christian religion, he admits the existence of the doctrines of the gospel in Gentile literature, and in explanation says: "The heathens, from a design of curiosity, put our doctrines into their works" (Cap. 46, 47).

3. Melito, bishop of Sardis in Lybia, who became a eunuch for Christ's sake, in an apology addressed to Marcus Antoninus in A. D. 161, a fragment of which is preserved by Eusebius, says: "Pious men are now persecuted and harassed throughout Asia, which was never done before; and impudent sycophants, and such as covet the possessions of others, taking occasion from the edicts, rob without fear or shame, and cease not to plunder those who have offended in nothing.

. . . For the philosophy which we profess truly flourished aforetime, but having blossomed again in the great reign of Cæsar Augustus, thy ancestor, it proved to be above

all things ominous of good for thy kingdom. . . . Retain, therefore, this religion, which grew as your empire grew, which began with Augustus, which was revered by your ancestors before all religion. Only Nero and Domitian, through the envy of certain malicious persons, were disposed to bring our doctrines into hatred" (Euseb. Eccl. Hist., book iv, chap. xxvi, p. 162).

4. Origen, born at Alexandria in 185, and died in 254, strongly confirms the foregoing testimony. He was one of the most eminent Fathers of the primitive church. He studied in the Eclectic school at Alexandria, under St. Clement and Ammonius Saccus. He first obtained the position of a teacher of grammar; next that of an instructor of Christian converts; and finally that of principal of the academy. He adopted the allegorical mode of biblical interpretation, which regards the letter as a mystical covering of a secret sense. Philo, Josephus, and other ancient Hebrew scholars, as well as the author of Paul's epistles, had authorized, by their principles and practice, the same method. A popular tumult obliging him to leave Alexandria, he visited Arabia, Palestine, Phœnicia, Achaia, and Rome. Wherever he went he became the preceptor of teachers, of priests, and of bishops. Celsus, in his "True Logos," having alleged that the worship among Christians was common to the pagans, Origen, in a reply entitled "*Ad Celsus*," gives the following explanation: "To this I answer that since I have granted that some notions of good and evil are originally planted in the minds of men, we need not wonder that Heraclitus and others, whether Greeks or barbarians, have acknowledged to the world that they held the very same notions that we mention" (book v).

Again he says, "God revealed those things to them, and whatsoever they have well spoken" (book vi).

5. Ammonius Saccus, the founder of the new Alexandrine Eclectic school, and a renowned primitive church Father, adds his testimony to our assertion in the following language, "All the Gentile religions, and even the Christian religion, are to be illustrated and explained by the principles of universal philosophy; but that in order to this the fables of the priests

are to be removed from paganism, and the interpretations of priests from Christianity." (See Mosheim's Eccl. History, volume i, p. 174.)

6. St. Clement of Alexandria, born at Athens 200, establishes the point in question by ample and irrefragable testimony. He traveled through Greece, Italy, and Asia, and successively became a presbyter at Alexandria, the principal of the Eclectic school, a famous teacher of rhetoric and philosophy, a fertile and popular writer, and the luminary and authority of the primitive church. The most important work which he has furnished mankind is written in imitation of the three degrees of the Grecian mysteries; that is, purification, initiation, and instruction. The first book, called *Protrepticus*, exhorts pagans to become Christians. The second book, called *Paidagogos*, explains Christian morals; and the third book, called *Stromata*, instructs in general subjects. In the *Stromata* he says, "One article of faith is that Christ is the first begotten of God, and we have proved him to be the very Logos, or universal reason, by which mankind were all partakers; therefore those who live by reason are in some sort Christians, notwithstanding they may have passed with you for Atheists, such as among the Greeks were Socrates, Heraclitus, and the like; such among the barbarians were Abraham, Ananas, Mizeal, and Elias." (See Reeves' Apology, vol. i, p. 83.)

Again, he writes: "All virtuous thoughts are imparted by divine inspiration, and that cannot be evil or of evil origin which tends to promote good; therefore the Greek philosophy is good. But God is the author of all good, and therefore the Greek philosophy is from God. It follows that the law was given to the Jews and philosophy to the Greeks until the advent of our Lord" (6 *Strom.* 17).

Again he observes, "This philosophy the pagans received from the fertilizing influence of the divine Logos, which descended at the same time on the Jews, giving them the law and the prophets; and upon the Gentiles, giving them philosophy, like rain which falls on the housetop as well as on the fields" (1 *Strom.* 7).

Again, this learned expounder of the doctrines of the primitive church, remarks: "Doth not Plato mention both the rivers of fire and that profound depth of the earth which the Jews call Gehenna? Does he not prophetically mention Tartarus, Cocytus, Acheron, Phlegethon, rivers of fire, and certain other like places of punishment, which led to correction and discipline?"

7. Eusebius, who was borne in Palestine in 270, and who died in 340, may be adduced as another supporter of the same proposition. In the course of his career he became bishop of Cæsarea, his native city, an author of distinguished theological reputation, and gave to the world the first ecclesiastical history ever penned. While he admits that Christianity reveals nothing new to mankind, he explains the mystery upon the hypothesis that the devil stole the Christian doctrines and gave them to the pagan poets and philosophers. (Euseb. *procudubio sed perdidit Locum.*)

In his "Ecclesiastical History," book i, chap. iv, entitled the "Religion announced by Christ nothing new or strange," he asserts that every pious person, from Abraham to the first of the human race, was a Christian, and hence infers "the religion delivered to us, in the doctrines of Christ, is not a new or strange doctrine." (P. 25, Rev. C. F. Cruse's translation.)

In book ii, chap. xvii, pp. 66-70, of the same translation, Eusebius gives Philo's description of the Therapeutæ (physicians), before the invention of the name of Christians, and long before the birth of Christ, who had churches, sacred scriptures, gospels, and epistles, probably the same as those in the New Testament, observed the festival of our Savior's passion, the vigil of the great festival, the exercises, hymns, and practices observed by the church in his day.

8. He also quotes from Aurelius, a pagan author, who wrote in A. D. 163, the following: "And this Mercury was plainly the Word by whom all things were made, as Heraclitus also would say; and by Jove, the same whom the barbarians affirm to have been in the place and dignity of a principle, and to be with God, and to be God, by whom all things were made, and in whom everything that is made has its life and being,

who descended into a body, and by putting on flesh took the appearance of man, though even then he gave proofs of the majesty of his nature; nay, and after his dissolution was deified again." (Euseb. *proeb. Evan.*, lib. xi, c. 19. See Lardner, vol. iv, p. 200.)

9. Constantine the Great, who was born 272, and who died in 357, in an oration addressed to the orthodox clergy, which met their approval, reminds them that "the Erythæan Sibyl, who lived in the sixth age after the flood, did yet by the power of divine inspiration prophesy of future matters that were to come to pass concerning God, by the first letters of six lines of a poem, which acrostically make Jesus Christus Dei Filius Salvator, Crux. And these things came in the virgin's mind by way of prophecy." He also urges that "Virgil, in his fourth eclogue, forty years before the birth of Christ, as if inspired by the celestial muse of Isaiah, had celebrated with all the pomp of oriental metaphor the return of the virgin; the fall of the serpent; the approaching birth of a godlike child, the offspring of the great Jupiter, who should expiate the guilt of human kind and govern the peaceful universe with the virtues of his father; the rise and appearance of a heavenly race, a primitive nation throughout the world; the gradual restoration of the innocence and felicity of the golden age." (Gib. *Decline*, vol. ii, ch. xx, p. 269.)

10. Arnobius, the elder, who became a teacher of rhetoric in the Nicomedean Eclectic school, and three years afterward professed the Christian faith, wrote seven books of "*Disputationes Adversus Gentes*," in which he indorses the general sentiment expressed by the above quoted Fathers, and says, "If Cicero's works had been read as they ought to have been, there would have been no need of Christian writers."

11. Lactantius, an influential Latin church Father, was born in Africa in 280 and died in 325. He was a celebrated orator, a polished writer, a famous teacher of rhetoric, and the principal of the Nicomedean Eclectic school. In his "*Divine Institutions*" he says: "If there had been any (among pagans) to collect the truth, which was scattered among sects and individuals, into one, and to have reduced it

into a system, there would, indeed, have been no difference between him and us" (book ii).

12. St. Augustine, the ablest polemic writer among the church Fathers, was born in Tagaste in Africa, and flourished between 354 and 403. In the progress of an eventful life he successively became a Manichæan, a teacher of the Eclectic school at Milan, the bishop of Hippo, the founder of nunneries and monasteries, and the author of numerous celebrated theological disquisitions. Respecting the origin of Christianity he thus enunciates his opinion: "In our time is the Christian religion, which to know and follow is the most sure and certain health, called according to that name, but not according to the thing of which it is the name; for the thing itself, the same which is now called the Christian religion, really was known to the ancients, nor was wanting at any time even from the beginning of the human race, until the time Christ came in the flesh, from whence the true religion, not as having been wanting in former times, but having in later times received a new name" (*Oper. Aust.*, vol. i, p. 12).

With the foregoing testimonies we beg to call the attention of investigators to the subjoined corroborative proof.

13. Faustus, a Manichæan bishop, addressing St. Augustine, says: "You have substituted your Agapæ for the sacrifices of the pagans; and for their idols your martyrs that you serve with the very same honors; you appease the shades of the dead with wine and feasts; you celebrate the solemn festivals of the Gentiles, their calends and their solstices; and as to their manners, those you have retained without any alteration. Nothing distinguishes you from the Gentiles except you assemble apart from them."

14. Abulmerar says: "We have in the first decade the sign of the virgin, following the most ancient tradition of the Persians, the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, Hermes, and Æsculapius, a young woman called in the Persian language, Seclidos de Darzama; in the Arabic, Adrenedefa—that is to say, a chaste, pure, immaculate virgin, suckling an infant, which some nations call Jesus, but which we in Greek call Christ."

15. Orpheus, 1000 B. C., says: "All things are made by

one Godhead, with three names, and this God is all things" (Parkhurst Heb. Lexicon).

16. According to Jahn Archeology, a text-book in theological seminaries, "Mahistan, a disciple of Zoroaster, believed in the immortality of the soul, in rewards and punishments after death, in a general resurrection, and at time of this resurrection that all the bad would be purged by fire and associated with the good."

17. Plato, in his Commonwealth, says: "If a man perfectly righteous should come upon earth, he would find so much opposition in the world that he would be reviled, scourged, and imprisoned by such men as passed for righteous, though they were extremely wicked" (Tom. ii).

18. From the preface of a work entitled, "Egyptian Mythology and Egyptian Christianity," written by John Sharp and published in London in 1863, we make the subjoined extract:

"The following are the principal doctrines which are most certainly known to be common in Egyptian mythology and modern orthodoxy as distinguished from the religion of Jesus. They include the Trinity, the two natures of Christ, and the atonement by vicarious suffering.

"1. That the creation and government of the world is not the work of one simple and undivided being, but of one God made up of several persons. This is the doctrine of plurality in unity.

"2. That the happiness or favor of the Judge of the living and the dead could scarcely be hoped for either from his justice or his mercy, unless an atoning sacrifice had been paid to him on our behalf, by a divine being; and that mankind, or some part of them, may hope to have their sins forgiven because of the merits and intercession of that being, and to be excused from punishment because he consented to be sacrificed for them. With the Egyptians there were four such chief mediators.

"3. That among the Gods or persons composing the God head, one, though a God, could yet suffer pain and be put to death.

"4. That a God, or man, or a being half God and man, once lived on earth, who had been born of an earthly mother but without an earthly father. . . .

"The Egyptian day for eating sugared cakes had been our 20th of January, but it was in the fourth century changed to be kept fourteen days earlier; and the sugared cakes of the Egyptians now mark the feast of Epiphany, Twelfth Night.

"The feast of Candles, which in the time of Herodotus was held in honor of God Neith, is yet marked in our almanac as Candlemas Day, or the purification of the Virgin Mary.

"When the Roman Catholic priest shaves the crown of his head it is because the Egyptian priest had done so before. When the English clergyman, though he preaches his sermon in a woolen robe, may read the litany in no dress but linen, it is because linen was the clothing of the Egyptians. Two thousand years before the bishops of Rome pretended to hold the keys of heaven and earth, there was an Egyptian priest with the high-sounding title of Appointed Keeper of the two doors of Heaven, in the city of Thebes."

The above statement is illustrated by numerous engravings from Egyptian tombs, temples, and papyri.

PRECEDENTS FOR THE GOSPEL STORY.

It has been clearly established in the foregoing pages that the idea of demigods, and gods themselves, holding sexual intercourse with the daughters of men, of women becoming pregnant by some miraculous influence from heaven without the coöperation of one of the male gender, was by no means new in the world at the beginning of the Christian era. We have seen that at a far earlier date Christna, Buddha, Zoroaster, Pythagoras, and others were believed to have been begotten without an earthly father.

During the more than two thousand years preceding the time of Jesus, the pagan nations had believed in demigods, sons of gods, and saviors, many of whom were brought into existence by the direct interposition of heaven, and without the assistance of a natural father. Among these may be

named Crite of Chaldea, Indra of Thibet, Deva Tat of Siam, Horus of Egypt, Xomolxis of Thrace, Zoar of the Bonzes, Adad of Assyria, Alcides of Thebes, Beddru of Japan, Æsculapius of Egypt and Greece, Prometheus of Caucasus, Apollo Adonis, and Hercules of Greece. To these may be added Odin and Thor of Scandinavia, Hesus of the Druids, and at least a score of others we need not name whom tradition and legend hand down to us. It is not here claimed that these all had a real existence, or that even one of them had a real existence, but they were believed in from two to four thousand years ago. If God decided to reveal himself to man by a miraculous process, it certainly seems a little singular that he should be under the necessity of adopting the plans invented and believed in by pagans and heathens hundreds of years before.

The theory of the divine paternity of Jesus rests entirely upon a dream that Matthew says Joseph had, and a vision which Luke says Mary witnessed. Of the means by which these writers obtained knowledge of the dream of Joseph and the vision of Mary, the world is left in utter ignorance. It can hardly be supposed that at the present day intelligent people could be made to believe a child could be begotten without the aid of one of the male sex, and that belief resting upon the authority of a dream or a vision, even though a score of people should make oath that the dream actually was dreamed or the vision seen. Such a statement, if made as occurring in our own time, most assuredly would not be credited for one moment; was, then, such an event any more possible two thousand years ago than now, and should it be believed any easier? An impossibility is by no means made possible by locating it and it being dated eighteen or nineteen hundred years ago. If the dream theory is the true one, if Jesus was begotten by a ghost or spirit, and if it was a matter of vast importance that the world should have correct information and the right belief in reference to it, how can Mark and John be excused for wholly ignoring the subject? Which is the more probable theory, that Jesus came into existence without a natural father, or that Matthew and Luke merely gave a new version of the ancient fables of celestial

cohabitation, or related something which they knew nothing about, and had not the slightest authority for stating?

It is a very noticeable feature in the four gospels about Jesus that very little is said of his infancy, childhood, youth, and early manhood. With the exception of the single incident mentioned by Luke about Jesus holding a discussion with learned doctors in the temple when twelve years of age, nothing is said of him between his early infancy and when he arrived at the age of thirty years. This is an extraordinary omission. If he was God, or the son of God, or the Savior of men, it would seem the world ought to know something of his career during the thirty years of his life—through infancy, childhood, and youth—where he passed his time, and at what he was engaged. It can hardly be reconciled with a natural view of the case that his faithful biographers should utterly ignore nine-tenths of his life. Is it because they knew nothing of him during that period of thirty years, or is it that his occupation was of a character that should not be known? If Matthew knew of the dream of Joseph, which was dreamed one hundred and sixty years before he wrote the account of it, and if Luke also wrote correctly of the vision Mary had more than a hundred years previous, would it not seem reasonable that they ought to have been able to say something of the boyhood and youth of Jesus—whether he attended school, whether he served his time at a trade, what he did as he merged into manhood, and what his occupation was before he commenced to preach?

SPURIOUS AND UNCANONICAL GOSPELS.

Besides the four gospels admitted in the New Testament, there were written in the first four centuries of the Christian era, as already stated, large numbers of other gospels or narratives pertaining to the mission and teachings of Jesus, varying in degrees of improbability and extravagance of statements, of the wonderful miracles said to be performed by Jesus, and in connection with him. There are said to have been in all several hundred of these gospels, some of which were considered as "spurious," written by persons who knew nothing

at all of the events which they attempted to describe, while others were accepted and accorded some degree of credit. The most unfortunate fact connected with all these gospels was the discrepancy of opinion as to their genuineness and trustworthiness. The gospels that were accepted by some, and believed to be truthful accounts, were utterly condemned by others, and denounced as wholly unworthy of recognition. Thus it turned out that there were none but what were accepted and appreciated by some, and there were none but what were denounced and ostracised by some. The great difficulty midst all this contradiction of opinions is to be able to decide with any degree of certainty which, if any, of these so-called gospels are worthy of credit, and which can be accepted as possessing a due share of authenticity and truthfulness; which were written by persons who possessed actual knowledge of what they attempted to narrate, and which writers were known to be men of veracity and reliability.

Truth compels the statement that what are known as the canonical gospels, and have been admitted into the New Testament, are not the oldest gospels; they were not the first to be read in the early Christian churches, and they were wholly unknown to the early Christian Fathers and writers until one hundred and fifty years after the death of him who was the hero of the story; also that not one of these gospels was written by a person known to be truthful, honest, and trustworthy. Indeed, it has not been known for the last fifteen hundred years, and is not known to-day, who was the writer of a single one of the two hundred gospels written in the first four Christian centuries. In this respect the canonical and uncanonical gospels stand upon an equality. It is unknown, even to our own time, with the slightest degree of certainty, when or by whom any one of the gospels were written. They are equally as anonymous and perhaps equally as apocryphal as the beautiful but wild and improbable stories in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. The teachers of the Christian faith pretend to claim that the four gospels ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, were written by those four persons. But few things in the world are more doubtful. There is no proof that one of the gospels was written

by the person whose name has been attached to it. It was amply shown in Volume I. of this work, by copious extracts from such able authorities as Prof. Newman, Greg, Chadwick, Cooper, etc., commencing on page 661, that there is no reliable authority for the assertion that the Gospel according to Matthew was written by Matthew, that the Gospel of Mark was written by Mark, that the Gospel according to Luke was written by Luke, or that the Gospel according to John was written by John. It is very easy to attach any given person's name to an anonymous production, but it is far less easy to show that the person given was really author of the production.

It was the custom in the early Christian centuries to write anonymously, especially such works as were not well authenticated, and were deficient in the element of truthfulness. It is most true that legends and traditions were rife in the first and second centuries of a character bearing some resemblance to the Jesus of the gospels, and all manner of extravagant statements of the wonderful deeds he had performed were connected with those legends. These passed from mouth to mouth, and from hand to hand. No one knew if they were true, no one knew if they were worthy of belief. They did not diminish in their transmission from individual to individual. It is not in the nature of things for legends and stories to grow less in their many narrations; they usually enlarge instead of contracting.

These gospel stories at first were only verbal. They were repeated from one to another, and were not placed upon parchment; but after a time they were written out and became the gospels—the foundation upon which the edifice of Christianity was erected. The four gospels in the New Testament were by no means the first of the gospels so written. The critical investigators who have looked into this matter inform us that there were several of these gospel stories known to be in existence, were used by the early Fathers and bishops, and were read in the meetings of the early Christians at least half a century before the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were known to be in existence.

It is a characteristic of all those gospels to be fragmentary and disjointed, made up of bits of legendary items which had passed from mouth to mouth. The earlier gospels were brief and imperfect, and these were the material of which the later ones were composed—the foundation upon which all were built. When written, the name of some distinguished person or some revered saint or apostle was appended to them to give them character and cause them to be well received. In this way it was as easy to attach the name of Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John to such productions as any other name. And were it positively known that Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were the real writers of the gospels ascribed to them, we are by no means sure that they would be entitled to any more credit than persons whose names we never heard. Unfortunately their veracity is not guaranteed, their truthfulness is very imperfectly indorsed. They may have been dreamers, visionary characters, extravagant story-tellers, much inclined to use the “long bow” and to draw somewhat extensively upon their imaginations. Few things are more easy of demonstration than that the writers of the gospels accorded to the four evangelists did not agree in their statements, did not narrate the events of which they wrote in the same order of occurrence, did not mention, only in some instances, the same events. The discrepancies, disagreements, and contradictions are painful to contemplate. The reader who has a taste for that sort of reading, especially in connection with the New Testament, will do well to turn to page 661, Vol. I., and re-read seventy-five of the succeeding pages. He will there find many facts connected with gospel matters well for every person to be familiar with.

Many of these gospels in the lapse of centuries have, as remarked, become lost; they have passed out of existence, and even the names of some of them are no longer known. Among those which have been preserved some may be mentioned. One chapter from “Toldoth Jeshu,” or the Gospel of Jeshu has been given. The Rev. S. Baring-Gould, in his “Lost and Hostile Gospels,” introduces and treats of the Gospel of the Hebrews, the Gospel of Clement, the Gospel of St. Peter, the Gospel of the Egyptians, the Gospel of the

Lord, the Gospel of Truth, the Gospel of Eve, the Gospel of Perfection, the Gospel of Philip, the Gospel of Judas. In a compilation called the Apocryphal New Testament, and which has been published in large numbers, are the Gospel of the Birth of Mary, Protevangelion, the First Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ, Thomas' Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ, the Gospel of Nicodemus, formerly called the Acts of Pontius Pilate. To these are added the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Laodiceans, the Epistles of Paul the Apostle to Seneca with Seneca's to Paul, the Acts of Paul and Thecla, the First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, the Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians, the General Epistle of Barnabas, the Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians, the Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians, the Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians, the Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans, the Epistle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians, the Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnæans, the Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp, the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, the First Book of Hermas, called the Visions; the Second Book of Hermas, called the Commands; the Third Book of Hermas, called the Similitudes. Among the lost gospels are the Gospel of Andrew, the Acts of Andrew, the Gospel of Apelles, the Gospel according to the Twelve Apostles, the Gospel of Barnabas, the Gospel of Bartholomew, the Writings of Bartholomew, the Gospel of Cerinthus, the Revelation of Cerinthus, the Epistle of Christ to Peter and Paul, other Books under the name of Christ, an Epistle of Christ produced by the Manichees, a Hymn taught by Christ to his Apostles, the Acts of the Apostles made use of by the Ebionites, the Gospel of the Ebionites, the Gospel of the Encratites, the Book of the Helkesaites, the False Gospels of Hesychius, the Book of James, the Acts of John, books under the name of John, the Gospel of Jude, the Gospel of Judas Iscariot, the Acts of the Apostles by Leucius, the Acts of the Apostles by Lentitius, the Acts of the Apostles by Leontius, the False Gospels published by Lucianus, the Acts of the Apostles used by the Manichees, the Gospel of Marcion, the Gospel of Matthias, a Book under the name of Matthias, the Traditions of Matthias, the Gospel of Merenthus,

the Gospel according to the Nazarenes, the Acts of Paul and Thecla, the Acts of Paul, the Preaching of Paul and Peter, the Book of Paul, the Revelation of Paul, the Acts of Peter, the Doctrine of Peter, the Gospel of Peter, the Judgment of Peter, the Preaching of Peter, the Revelation of Peter, the Books of Peter, the Acts of Philip, the Gospel of Philip, the Gospel of Scythianus, the Acts of the Apostles by Seleucus, the Revelation of Stephen, the Gospel of Titian, the Gospel of Thaddeus, the Catholic Epistle of Themison the Montanist, the Acts of Thomas, the Gospel of Thomas, the Revelation of Thomas, the Books of Thomas, the Gospel of Truth, the Gospel of Valentinus, etc., etc.

These are but a few of the gospels and epistles written during the first four centuries of our era. It would require volumes to give the contentions and quarrelings that for hundreds of years were kept up respecting these so-called sacred writings. All were called "holy" and "genuine," and all were strongly denounced as false and spurious. Whether any of these gospels and epistles are worthy the serious consideration of the people in this age of the world is questionable. The many councils held in the early Christian centuries, composed of hundreds of the bishops and priests of the various churches, spent weeks and months of time in contending over those fictitious and anonymous gospels and epistles, each struggling to secure the recognition and admission of his own favorite legends, stories, and fictions.

It may not be uninteresting to the reader to review what has been said of these gospels by eminent writers, and to read specimens of the gospels themselves. The Rev. S. Baring-Gould makes these remarks touching the Gospel of the Hebrews:

"Eusebius quotes Papias, Irenæus, and Origen as authorities for his statement that St. Matthew wrote his gospel first in Hebrew. Papias, a contemporary of Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John, and who carefully collected all information he could obtain concerning the apostles, declares that 'Matthew wrote his gospel in the Hebrew dialect, and that every one translated it as he was able.' Irenæus, a disciple of Polycarp, and therefore also likely to have trustworthy

information on this matter, says 'Matthew, among the Hebrews, wrote a gospel in their own language while Peter and Paul were preaching the gospel at Rome, and founding the church there.' In a fragment, also, of Irenæus, edited by Dr. Grabe, it is said that the Gospel according to Matthew was written to the Jews, for he earnestly desired a Messiah of the posterity of David. Matthew, in order to satisfy them on this point, began his gospel with the genealogy of Jesus."

Much other testimony from the early Fathers and writers is adduced to prove that Matthew wrote his gospel in Hebrew, and the fact is well established, the case is well made out. But when it is remembered—which is the simple truth—that the Gospel of Matthew, "as it appears in the New Testament canon," is not from the Hebrew, but was written in Greek, we have the positive proof that our Gospel of Matthew is not the true Gospel of Matthew at all, but some other person's gospel, with the name of Matthew appended to it.

Mr. Baring-Gould gives quotations from the Gospel of the Hebrews, which is one of the condemned gospels, and places in comparison passages from our Gospel according to St. Matthew, showing clearly that what is ascribed to Matthew was borrowed or adopted from the uncanonical gospel, after which he remarks, "The comparison of these two accounts is not favorable to the canonical gospel." He subsequently shows that there were different versions of the uncanonical Gospel of the Hebrews, and gives quotations of the version attributed to St. Epiphanius. So it seems that the uncanonical as well as the canonical gospels were somewhat extensively tampered with by the saints.

In continuing the treatment of this uncanonical gospel, he says: "St. Jerome obtained his copy of the Gospel of the Hebrews from Beræa, in Syria, and not therefore from the purest source. Had he copied and translated the codex he found in the library of Pamphilus, at Cæsarea, instead of that he procured from Beræa, it is probable that he would have found it not to contain the passages of Gnostic tendency. These interpolations were made in the second century, when Gnostic ideas had begun to effect the Ebionites, and break them up into more or less heretical sects. Their copies of the Gospel

of the Hebrews differed, for the Gnostic Ebionites curtailed it in some places and amplified it in others. In reconstructing the primitive lost Gospel of the Nazarenes, it is very necessary to note these Gnostic passages and to withdraw them from the text. We shall come to some more of their additions and alterations presently. It is sufficient for us to note here that the heretical gospel in use among the Gnostic Ebionites was based on the orthodox Gospel of the Hebrews. The existence of these two versions explains the very different treatment their gospel meets with at the hands of the Fathers of the church. Some, and these the earliest, speak of this gospel with reverence, and place it almost on a line with the canonical gospels; others speak of it with horror, as a heretical corruption of the gospel of St. Matthew. The former saw the primitive text, the latter the curtailed and amplified version in use among the heretical Ebionites."

In the somewhat extensive examination which our author gives to the Gospel of the Hebrews, he further along says: "In the Ebionite gospel, 'by a criminal fraud,' says St. Epiphanius, a protestation has been placed in the mouth of the Lord against the Paschal sacrifice of the lamb, by changing a positive phrase into a negative one. When the disciples ask Jesus where they shall prepare the Passover he is made to reply, not, as in St. Luke, that with desire he had desired to eat this Passover, but, 'Have I, then, any desire to eat the flesh of the Paschal lamb with you.' The purpose of this interpolation of two words is clear. The Samaritan Ebionites, like the Essenes, did not touch meat, regarding all animal food with the greatest repugnance. By the addition of two words they were able to convert the saying of our Lord into a sanction of their superstition. But this saying of Jesus is now found only in St. Luke's Gospel. It must have stood originally without those two words in the Gospel of the Twelve. Another of their alterations of the gospel was to the same intent. Instead of making St. John the Baptist eat locusts and wild honey they gave him for his nourishment wild honey only." It was perhaps rather cruel to take away the locusts.

After numerous quotations and comparisons, showing that changes had taken place, and that different versions were in

use, the Rev. Baring-Gould gives parts of many fragments which show conclusively that the Gospel of St. Matthew as it stands in the New Testament was a compilation containing parts of older gospels or traditions. This is undoubtedly the correct conclusion. He closes his examination into the origin of the Gospel of the Hebrews in these words :

"In everything, both human and divine, there is a union of infallibility in that which is of supreme importance, and of fallibility in that which concerns not salvation. The lenses through which the light of the world shone to remote ages were human scribes, liable to error. Having established the origin of the Gospel of St. Matthew we are able now to see our way to establishing that of the Gospel of the Twelve, or Gospel of the Hebrews. No doubt it also was a mosaic made out of the same material as the Gospel of St. Matthew."

THE CLEMENTINE GOSPEL is next passed through a critical examination of twenty-five pages. The conclusion to be arrived at is that it is also a compilation in a similar way as are the three synoptical gospels.

A few pages are devoted to the GOSPEL OF PETER, accepted by Serapion, bishop of Antioch, as orthodox, and afterward set aside as heretical; but as that particular gospel is lost, not very much can be made of it.

THE GOSPEL OF THE EGYPTIANS is next taken up. It was mentioned by several of the early Fathers, and existed, like the canonical gospels, in the latter part of the second century. It was then regarded as genuine, and canonical as either of the many gospels which have been named. It undoubtedly had an earlier existence than any of the four canonical gospels. Baring-Gould says: "To form an idea of its tendency we must have recourse to two different sources, the second Epistle of Clemens Romanus, the author of which seems to have made use of no other gospel than that of the Egyptians, and Clement of Alexandria, who quotes three passages from it, and refutes the theories of certain heretics of his time, derived from them. The second Epistle of St. Clement of Rome is a Judaizing work, as Schneckenburg has proved incontestably. It is sufficient to remark that the Chiliast belief which transpires in more than one place, the analogy of ideas

and of expressions which it bears to the Clementine Homilies, and finally the selection of Clement of Rome, a personage as dear to the Ebionites as the Apostles James and Peter, to place the composition under his venerated name, are as many indications of the Judæo-Christian character and origin as this apocryphal work. The gospel cited by the author of this epistle, except in two or three phrases, which are not found in any of our canonical gospels, recalls that of St. Matthew. Nevertheless it is certain that the quotations are from the Gospel of the Egyptians, for one of the passages cited in this epistle is also quoted by Clement of Alexandria, who tells us whence it comes—from the Egyptian Gospel. We may conclude from this that the Gospel of the Egyptians presented great analogy to our first canonical gospel, without being identical with it, and consequently that it was related closely to the Gospel of the Hebrews. If the second Epistle of Clement of Rome determine for us the family to which this gospel belonged, the passages we shall extract from the *Stromata* of Clement of Alexandria will determine its order."

After quoting numerous passages and commenting on them in his able and learned manner, he closes with these observations: "A gospel—which, we do not know; it may have been that of Mark—was brought into Egypt. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews, an epistle clearly addressed to the Alexandrian Jews, prepared their minds to fuse Philonism with Christianity. We see its influence in the Gospel of St. John. That evangelist adopted Philo's doctrine of the Logia; the author of the Gospel of the Egyptians, that of the bondage of the spirit in matter. The conceptions contained in the three passages which Clement of Alexandria has preserved are closely united. They all are referable to a certain theosophy, the exposition of which is to be found in the writings of Philo, and which may be in vain sought elsewhere at that period.

"Not only are there to be found here the theosophic system of the celebrated Alexandrine Jew, but also, what is a still clearer index of the source whence the Egyptian Gospel drew its mystic asceticism, we find the quaint expressions and forms of speech which belonged to Philo, and to none but

him. No one but Philo had thought to find in the first chapters of Genesis the history of the fall of the soul into the world of sense, and to make of Eve—of the woman—the symbol of the human body; and starting from this to explain how the soul could return to its primitive condition—purely spiritual—by shaking off the sensible to which, in its present state, it is attached. When we shall have trampled under foot our tunics of skins, wherewith we have been covered since the fall, this garment, given to us because we were ashamed of our nakedness; when the body shall have become like the soul; when the union of the soul with the body—i. e., of the male and the female—shall exist no more; when the woman, that is, the body, shall be no more productive, shall no more produce generation and death; when its works are destroyed, then we shall not die any more; we shall be as we were before our fall—pure spirits; and this will be the kingdom of the Lord. And to prepare for this transformation what is to be done? Eat of every herb, nourish ourselves on the fruit of every tree of paradise, that is, cultivate the soul, and not occupy it with anything but that which will make it live; but abstain from the herb of its bitterness, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, that is, reject all that can weave closer the links binding the soul to the body, retain it in its prison, its grave.

“It is easy to see how Philonian ideas continued to exert their influence in Egypt when absorbed into Christianity. It was these ideas which peopled the deserts of Nitria and Scete with myriads of monks wrestling with their bodies—those prison-houses of their souls—struggling to die to the world of matter that their ethereal souls might shake themselves free. Their spirits were like moths in a web, bound by silken threads; the spirit would be choked by these fetters, unless it could snap them and sail away.”

We have here a very clear view of one of the processes by which the peculiar and somewhat beautiful philosophy of Philo became somewhat blended with the teachings which had been ascribed to Jesus. But it must be borne in mind that Philo was a learned, speculative Jew, and that there is not the slightest proof or indication that he knew anything

or heard anything of such a character as Jesus of Nazareth.

THE GOSPEL OF THE LORD is the next one examined. This gospel was used by Marcion, and has been styled the banner under which the left of the Christian army marched, as the right advanced under that of the Gospel of the Hebrews. "In opposition to Ebionitism," says Baring-Gould," with its narrow restraints and its low Christology, stood an exclusive Hellenism. Ebionitism saw in Jesus the son of David, come to re-edit the law, to provide it with new sanction, after he had winnowed the chaff from the wheat in it. Marcionism looked to the atonement, the salvation wrought by Christ for all mankind, to the revelation of the truth, the knowledge of the mysteries of the Godhead made plain to men through God the good and merciful, who sent his son to bring men out of ignorance into light, out of the bondage of the law into the freedom of the gospel. The gospel, in the eyes of Marcion and the extreme followers of St. Paul, represented free grace, overflowing goodness, complete reconciliation with God. But such goodness stood contrasted with the stern justice of the Creator, as revealed in the books of the Old Testament. Infinite, unconditioned forgiveness was incompatible with the idea of God as a law-giver and a judge. The restraint of the law and the freedom of the gospel could no more emanate from the same source than sweet water and bitter. Therefore, the Pauline party were led on to regard the God who is revealed in the Old Testament as a different God from the God revealed by Christ. Cerdo first and Marcion after him represented the God of this world—the Demiurge—to be the author of evil; but the author of evil only in so far as that his nature being incomplete, his work was incomplete also. He created the world, but the world, partaking in his imperfection, contains evil mixed with god. He created the angel-world, and part of it, through defect in the divinity of their first cause, fell from heaven. The germs of this doctrine, it was pretended, were to be found in St. Paul's Epistles."

"Gnosticism, with easy impartiality, affected Ebionitism on one side and Marcionism on the other, intensifying their opposition. It was like oxygen combining here to form an alkali, there to generate an acid. The God of love, according to

Marcion, does not punish. His dealings with man are all benevolence, communication of free grace, bestowal of ready forgiveness. For if sin be merely violation of law of the God of this world, it is indifferent to the highest God, who is above the Demiurge, and regards not his vexatious restrictions on the liberty of man. Yet Marcion was not charged by his warmest antagonists with immorality. They could not deny that the Marcionites entirely differed from all other Pauline Atinonians in their moral conduct—that, for example, in their abhorrence of heathen games and pastimes they came fully up to the standard of the most rigid Catholic Christians. While many of the disciples of St. Paul, who held that an accomodation with prevailing errors was allowable, that no importance was to be attached to externals, found no difficulty in evading the obligation to become martyrs, the Marcionites readily, fearlessly, underwent the interrogations of the judge and the tortures of the executioner.”

“The charge of mutilating the canonical gospels was brought by the orthodox Fathers against both the Ebionites on one side and the Marcionites and Valentinians on the other, because the gospels they used did not exactly agree with those employed by the middle party in the church which ultimately prevailed. But the extreme parties on their side made the same charge against the Catholics. It is not necessary to believe these charges in every case. If the gospels were compiled as in the manner I have contended they were, such discrepancies must have occurred. Every church had its own collection of the ‘Logia’ and of the ‘Practhenta’ of Christ. The more voluminous of these collections, those better strung together, thrust the earlier, less complete, collections into the background. And these collections were continuously being augmented by the acquisition of fresh material; and the new material was squeezed into the existing text, often without much consideration for the chain of the story or teaching which it broke and dislocated.”

“Marcion would not scruple to use the knife upon a gospel that came into his hands, if he found in it passages that wholly upset his doctrine of the Demiurge and of asceticism. For when the church was full of gospels, and none were as yet

settled authoritatively as canonical, private opinion might, unrebuked, choose one gospel and reject the others, or subject any gospel to critical supervision. The manner in which the gospels were composed laid them open to criticism. Any church might hesitate to accept a saying of our Lord and incorporate it with the gospel with which it was acquainted till satisfied that the saying was a genuine apostolic tradition. And how was a church to be satisfied? By internal evidence of genuineness, when the apostles themselves had passed away. Consequently each church was obliged to exert its critical faculty in the composition of its gospel. And that the churches did exert their judgment freely is evidenced by the mass of apocryphal matter which remains, the dross after the refining, piled up in the Gospels of Nicodemus, of the Infancy of Thomas, and of Joseph the Carpenter, all of which was deliberately rejected as resting on no apostolic authority, as not found in any church to be read at the sacred mysteries, but as mere folk-tales buzzed about, nowhere producing credentials of authenticity." In this respect the canonical gospels are no better off than the uncanonical; they are all equally apocryphal, all equally deserve to be deliberately rejected, all are equally mere folk-tales buzzed about, nowhere producing credentials of authenticity. This was the case until after several quarrelling and fighting councils of bishops and priests, who very imperfectly and senselessly pretended to *decide* which were God's word.

After giving profuse quotations and comparing them with corresponding passages in the canonical gospels, Baring-Gould comes to the conclusion that if the Gospel of the Lord was not the original of St. Luke's Gospel, the latter was based upon it. He says: "The Gospel of the Lord contains nothing which is not found in that of St. Luke. The arrangement is so similar that we are forced to the conclusion that it was either used by St. Luke or that it was his original composition. If he used it, then his right to the title of author of the third canonical gospel falls to the ground, as what he added was of small amount. Who, then, composed the gospel? We know of no one to whom tradition even at that early age attributed it." Thus again it is seen that the world must forever

remain in blissful ignorance as to who is the author of the canonical Gospel of Luke or of the uncanonical one which is believed to be the original. The whole thing is a perfect muddle of uncertainty and doubt.

THE GOSPEL OF TRUTH is the next uncanonical gospel which receives attention. This was particularly patronized by Valentine, by birth an Egyptian, probably of Jewish descent, who it is said received his education at Alexandria. From this city he traveled to Rome, near the middle of the second century. In both places he preached orthodox Christianity, after which he retired to Cyprus. A miserable bigotry which refused to see in a heretic any motives but those of evil declared that in disgust at not obtaining a bishopric which he coveted, and to which a confessor was preferred, Valentine lapsed into heresy. Such an explanation, however, is hardly necessary; he was of an active mind and ardent zeal. He strove to break through the hard facts to principles on which they reposed. He was a pioneer in Christian theology. He succeeded in rousing much opposition and enmity on the part of the strait-laced sticklers for unheretical Christianity. Baring-Gould speaks of the spread of his doctrines in this wise: "If Valentinianism did not degenerate into the frantic licentiousness of the earlier Pauline heretics, it was because the doctrine of Valentine was an intellectual, theosophical system quite above the comprehension of vulgar minds, and therefore only embraced by exalted mystics and cold philosophers. The Valentinians were not accused of mutilating the scriptures, but of evaporating their significance. 'Marcion,' says Tertullian, 'knife in hand, has cut the scriptures to pieces to give support to his system. Valentine has the appearance of sparing them, and of trying rather to accommodate his errors to them, than of accommodating them to his errors. Nevertheless, he has curtailed, interpolated, more than did Marcion by taking from the words their force and natural value to give them forced signification.'"

"The Valentinians possessed a number of apocryphal works. 'Their number is infinite,' says Irenæus. But this probably applies not to the first Valentinians, but to the Valentinian sects, among whom apocryphal works did abound. Certain

it is that in all the extracts made from the writings of Valentine, Ptolemy, and Heracleon, by Origen, Epiphanius, Tertullian, etc., though they abound in quotations from St. Paul's epistles and from the canonical gospels, there are none from any other source. Nevertheless, Irenæus attributes to them possession of a 'Gospel of Truth' (*Evangelium Veritatis*). 'This scripture,' says he, 'does not in any point agree with our four canonical gospels.' To this also, perhaps, Tertullian refers when he says that the Valentinians possessed 'their own gospel in addition to ours.'" It was perhaps very convenient for each sect of the early Christian church to have gospels and scriptures of its own. They must have experienced no lack; there was enough to go around.

THE GOSPEL OF EVE.—"Valentinianism," says Baring-Gould, "assumed two forms, broke into two sects—the Marcosians and the Ophites. Mark, who lived in the latter half of the second century, came probably from Palestine, as we may gather from his frequent use of forms from the Aramæan liturgy. But he did not bring with him any of the Judaizing spirit—none of the grave reverence for the moral law and decency of the Nazarine. Ebionite and kindred sects sprung from the ruined church of the Hebrews. He was followed by trains of women, whom he corrupted, and converted into prophetesses. His custom was, in an assembly, to extend a chalice to a woman, saying to her, 'The grace of God, which excels all, and which the mind cannot conceive or explain, fill all your inner man, and increase his knowledge in you, dropping the grain of mustard-seed into good ground.' A scene like a Methodist revival followed. The woman was urged to speak in prophecy. She hesitated, declared her inability. Warm, passionate appeals followed closely one on another, couched in equivocal language, exciting the religious and natural passions simultaneously. The end was a convulsive fit of incoherent utterings, and the curtain fell on the rapturous embraces of the prophet and his spiritual bride.

"Mark possessed a gospel, and 'an infinite number of apocryphal scriptures,' says Irenæus. The gospel contained a falsified life of Christ. One of the stories from it he quotes. When Jesus was a boy he was learning letters.

The master said, 'Say Alpha.' Jesus repeated after him, 'Alpha.' Then the master said, 'Say Beta.' But Jesus answered, 'Nay, I will not say Beta till you have explained to me the meaning of Alpha.' The Marcosians made much of the hidden mysteries of the letters of the alphabet, showing that Mark had brought with him from Palestine something akin to the cabalism of the Jewish rabbis. This story is found in the apocryphal Gospel of St. Thomas. It runs somewhat differently in the different versions of that gospel, and is repeated twice in each with slight variations." Several different versions, as they appear in as many gospels, are then given, when he continues:

"At the root of Mark's teaching there seems to have been a sort of Pantheism. He taught that all had sprung from a great world-mother, partook of her soul and nature; but over against this female principle stood the deity, the male element. Man represents the deity, woman the world element, and it is only through the union of the divine and the material that the material can be quickened into spiritual life. In accordance with this theory they had a ceremonial of what he called spiritual—but was eminently carnal—marriage, which is best left undescribed.

"Not widely removed from the Marcosians was the Valentinian sect of the Ophites. Valentinianism mingled with the floating superstition, the fragments of the wreck of Sabianism, which was to be found among the lower classes. The Ophites represented the Demiurge in the same way as did the Valentinians. They called the God of this world and of the Jews by the name of Jaldaboth. He was a limited being, imposing restraint on all his creatures. He exercised his power by imposing law. As long as his creatures obeyed law, they were subject to his dominion. But above Jaldaboth, in the sublime region without limit, reigns the supreme God. When Adam broke the law of the world-god he emancipated himself from his bondage; he passed out of his realm; he placed himself in relation to the supreme God.

"The world is made by Jaldaboth, but in the world is infused a spark of soul, emanated from the highest God. This divine soul strives after emancipation from the bonds

imposed by connection with matter created by the God of this world. This world-soul, under the form of a serpent, urged Eve to emancipate herself from thralldom and pass with Adam, by an act of transgression, into the glorious liberty of the sons of the supreme God. The doctrines of the Ophites with respect to Christ was that of Valentine. Christ came to break the last chains of law by which man was bound, and to translate him into the realm of grace where sin does not exist. The Ophites possessed a gospel called the Gospel of Eve. It contained, no doubt, an account of the Fall from their peculiar point of view. St. Epiphanius has preserved two passages from it. They are so extraordinary, and throw such a light on the doctrines of this gospel, that I quote one as follows :

"I was planted on a lofty mountain, and lo! I beheld a man of great stature, and another who was mutilated. And then I heard a voice like unto thunder. And when I drew near, he spake with me after this wise: I am thou and thou art I. And wheresoever thou art there am I, and I am dispersed through all. And wheresoever thou willest, there canst thou gather me; but in gathering me thou gatherest thyself.

"The meaning of this passage is not doubtful. It expresses the doctrine of absolute identity between Christ and the believer, the radiation of divine virtue through all souls, destroying their individuality, that all may be absorbed into Christ. Individualities emerge out of God, and through Christ are drawn back into God. . . . It is greatly to be regretted that we have so little of this curious book preserved.

"THE GOSPEL OF PERFECTION was another work regarded as sacred by the Ophites. St. Epiphanius says: 'Some of them (*i. e.*, of the Gnostics) there are who vaunt the possession of a certain fictitious, far-fetched poem which they call the Gospel of Perfection, whereas, it is not a gospel, but the perfection of misery. For the bitterness of death is consummated in that production of the devil. Others without shame boast their Gospel of Eve.' St. Epiphanius calls this Gospel of Perfection a poem, but M. Nicolas justly observes that the Greek word used is not to describe the work as a poetical composition, but as a fiction. In a passage of Irenæus, of which only the Latin has been preserved, the Gospel of Judas is called 'Confictio.' "

THE GOSPEL OF ST. PHILIP is said to have belonged to the same category as the last two, if not to the Ophites to a similar sect, perhaps that of the Prodicians. St. Philip passed in the early ages of Christianity as having been, like St. Paul, an apostle of the Gentiles, and perhaps as having agreed with his views on the law and evangelical liberty. Tradition, however, had confounded Philip the apostle and Philip the deacon of Cæsarea, who, after having been a member of the Hellenist church at Jerusalem and having been driven thence by the martyrdom of Stephen, was the first to carry the gospel beyond the family of Israel to convert the heathen to Christ. His zeal and success caused him to be called an evangelist. In the second century it was supposed that an evangelist meant one who had written a gospel. And as no gospel bearing his name existed, one was very conveniently composed for him, which doubtless answered the same purpose, to those who unfalteringly believed in it, as though he had written it himself. Of this gospel Epiphanius has preserved the following passage:

The Lord has revealed to me the words to be spoken by the soul when it ascends into heaven, and how it has to answer each of the celestial powers. The soul must say: "I have known myself, and I have gathered myself from all parts. I have not born children to Archon (the prince of this world), but I have plucked up his roots, and I have gathered his dispersed members. I have learned who thou art: for I am, saith the soul, of the number of the celestial ones. But if it is proved that the soul has borne a son, she must return downward till she has recovered her children, and has absorbed them into herself."

This passage is thought to have this signification: The soul, trammelled with the chains of matter, created by the Archon, the creator of the world, has to emancipate itself from all material concerns. Each thought, interest, passion, excited by anything in the world, is a child borne by the soul to Archon, to which the soul has contributed animation, the world, form. The work of life is the disengagement of the soul from all concern in the affairs of the world, in the requirements of the body. When the soul has reached the most exalted perfection, it is cold, passionless, indifferent; then it comes before the supreme God, passing through the spheres, guarded by attendant æons, or angels, and to each it

protests its disengagement. But should any thought or care for mundane matters be found lurking in the recesses of the soul, it has to descend again and remain in exile till it has re-absorbed all the life it gave, the interest it felt in such concerns, and then again make its essay to reach God.

St. Paul held the rabbinic ideas of the spheres surrounding the throne of God, and the foregoing was doubtless elaborated from Paul's epistles. The rabbinic idea, in turn, was in all probability obtained from the Chaldees, "and from the same source, perhaps," says Baring-Gould, "sprang the conception of the soul making her ascension through the angel-guarded spheres, which we find in the fragment of the Gospel of St. Philip. Unfortunately we have not sufficient of the early literature of the Chaldees and Assyrians to be able to say for certain that it was so. But a very curious sacred poem has been preserved on the terra-cotta tablets of the library of Assurbani-Pal, which exhibits a similar belief as prevalent anciently in Assyria. This poem represents the descent of Istar into the immutable land, the nether world, divided into seven circles. The heavenly world of the Chaldees was also divided into seven circles, each ruled by a planet. The poem, therefore, exhibits a descent instead of an ascent. But there is little reason to doubt that the passage in each case would have been analogous. We have no ancient Assyrian account of an ascent; we must therefore content ourselves with what we have. Istar descends into the lower region, and as she traverses each circle is despoiled of one of her coverings worn in the region above, till she stands naked before Belith, the queen of the Land of Death.

' 1. At the first gate, as I made her enter, I despoiled her; I took the crown from off her head.

' Hold, gatekeeper! thou hast taken the crown from off my head.'

' Enter into the empire of the Lady of the Earth, to this stage of the circles.'

2. At the second gate I made her enter; I despoiled her and took from off her the earrings from her ears.

' Hold, keeper of the gate! thou hast despoiled me of the earrings from my ears.'

' Enter into the empire of the Lady of the Earth, to this stage of the circles.'

3. At the third gate I made her enter; I despoiled her of the precious jewels on her neck.

'Hold, keeper of the gate! thou hast despoiled me of the jewels of my neck.'

'Enter into the empire of the Lady of the Earth, to this stage of the circles.'

4. At the fourth gate I made her enter; I despoiled her of the broach of jewels upon her breast.

'Hold, keeper of the gate! thou hast despoiled me of the broach of jewels upon my breast.'

'Enter into the empire of the Lady of the Earth, to this stage of the circles.'

5. At the fifth gate I made her enter; I despoiled her of the belt of jewels about her waist.

'Hold, keeper of the gate! thou hast despoiled me of the belt of jewels about my waist.'

'Enter into the empire of the Lady of the Earth, to this stage of the circles.'

6. At the sixth gate I made her enter; I despoiled her of her armlets and bracelets.

'Hold, keeper of the gate! thou hast despoiled me of my armlets and bracelets.'

'Enter into the empire of the Lady of the Earth, to this stage of the circles.'

7. At the seventh gate I made her enter; I despoiled her of her skirt.

'Hold, keeper of the gate! thou hast despoiled me of my skirt.'

'Enter into the empire of the Lady of the Earth, to this degree of circles.'

"We have something very similar in the judgment of souls in the Egyptian Ritual of the Dead. From Chaldea or from Egypt the Gnostics who used the Gospel of St. Philip drew their doctrine of the soul traversing several circles, and arrested by an angel at the gate of each. The soul, a divine element, is in the earth combined with the body, a work of the Archon. But her aspirations are for that which is above; she strives to 'extirpate his roots.' All her 'scattered members,' her thoughts, wishes, impulses, are gathered into one uptapering flame. Then only does she 'know (God) for what he is,' for she has learned the nature of God by introspection.

"Such, if I mistake not, is the meaning of the passage quoted by Epiphanius. The sect which used such a gospel must have been mystical and ascetic, given to contemplation, and avoiding the indulgence of their animal appetites. It was that probably of Prodicus, strung on the same Pauline thread as the heresies of Marcion, Nicolas, Valentine, Marcus, the Ophites, Carpocratians, and Cainites. Prodicus, on the strength of St. Paul's saying that all Christians are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, maintained the sovereignty of every man placed under the gospel. But a king is above law, is not bound by law, therefore the Christian is under no bondage of law, moral or ceremonial. He is lord of the Sabbath,

above all ordinances. Prodicus made the whole worship of God to consist in the inner contemplation of the essence of God. External worship was not required of the Christian; that had been imposed by the Demiurge on the Jews and all under his bondage till the time of the fulness of the gospel had come. The Prodicians did not constitute an important, widely-extended sect, and were confounded by many of the early Fathers with other Pauline Gnostic sects."

THE GOSPEL OF JUDAS is the last of the lost and hostile gospels examined by Baring-Gould. It was made use of by certain Christian sects classed as heretics—the followers of Carpocrates, Epiphanes, Isadore, and others. They made a distinction "between the supreme God and the Demiurge, the God of the Jews, of the Law, of the World. The body, the work of the God of creation, is evil; it 'serves the law of sin,' " i. e., of the Demiurge. "But the Demiurge has imposed on man his law, the Ten Commandments. If the soul consents to that law, submits to be in bondage under it, the soul passes from the liberty of its ethereal sonship under the dominion of a god at enmity with the Supreme Being. Therefore the true Christian must show his adherence to the Omnipotent by breaking the laws of the Decalogue—the more the better. . . . The Cainites exhibit Pauline Antinomianism in its last, most extravagant, most grotesque expression. Their doctrine was the extreme development of an idea in itself originally containing an element of truth."

"Looking at the Old Testament," from the standpoint of the Cainites and other similar heretical believers, "the extreme wing of the Pauline host, the Cainities, naturally came to regard the Patriarchs as being under the protection, the prophets as being under the inspiration, of the God of the Jews, and therefore to hold them in abhorrence as enemies of Christ and the Supreme Deity. Those, on the other hand, who were spoken of in the Old Testament as resisting God, punished by God, were true prophets, martyrs of the Supreme Deity, forerunners of the gospel. Cain became a type of virtue; Abel, on the contrary, of error and perversity. The inhabitants of Sodom and Gomorrah were pioneers of gospel

freedom, Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, martyrs protesting against Mosaism.

“In this singular rehabilitation, Judas Iscariot was relieved from the anathema weighing upon him. This man who had sold his master was no longer regarded as a traitor, but as one who, inspired by the Spirit of Wisdom, had been an instrument in the work of redemption. The other apostles, narrowed by their prejudices, had opposed the idea of the death of Christ, saying, ‘Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee.’ But Judas, having a clearer vision of the truth, and the necessity for the redemption of the world by the death of Christ, took the heroic resolution to make that precious sacrifice inevitable. Rising above his duties as disciple, in his devotion to the cause of humanity, he judged it necessary to prevent the hesitations of Christ, who at the last moment seemed to waver, to render inevitable the prosecution of his great work. Judas therefore went to the chiefs of the synagogue and covenanted with them to deliver up his master to their will, knowing that by his death the salvation of the world could alone be accomplished. Judas therefore became the chief apostle of the Cainites. They composed a gospel under his name. Irenæus also mentions it. It must therefore date from the second century. Theodoret mentions it likewise. But none of the ancient Fathers quote it. Not a single fragment of this curious work has been preserved.”

“In addition to the Gospel of Judas the Cainites possessed an apocryphal book relating to that apostle whom they venerated scarcely second to Judas, viz., St. Paul. It was entitled the ‘Ascension of Paul,’ and related to his translation into the third heaven and the revelation of unutterable things he there received. An ‘Apocalypse of Paul’ has been preserved, but it is almost certainly a different book from the Anabaticon. It contains nothing favoring the heretical views of the Cainites, and was read in some of the churches of Palestine. This Apocalypse in Greek has been published by Dr. Tischendorf in his *Apocalypses Apocryphæ* (Lips. 1866), and the translation of a later Syriac version in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, vol. viii, 1864.”

Thus the Rev. S. Baring-Gould closes his examination and treatment of the lost and hostile gospels. In closing his preface he says as follows: "The lost gospels are no mere literary curiosity, the examination of them no barren study. They furnish us with most precious information on the manner in which all the gospels were compiled; they enable us in several instances to determine the correct reading in our canonical Matthew and Luke; they even supply us with particulars to fill lacunæ which exist, or have been made, in our synoptics."

Next will be presented extracts from some of the better known uncanonical gospels, as they appear in the Apocryphal New Testament. The similarity in style to the canonical gospels will be readily perceived. The first is this:

THE GOSPEL OF THE BIRTH OF MARY.—In the primitive ages there was a gospel extant bearing this name, attributed to St. Matthew, and received as genuine and authentic by several of the ancient Christian sects. It is to be found in the works of Jerome, a Father of the church, who flourished in the fourth century, from whence the present translation is made. His contemporaries, Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis, and Austin, also mention a gospel under this title. The ancient copies differed from Jerome's, for from one of them the learned Faustus, a native of Britain, who became Bishop of Riez, in Provence, endeavored to prove that Christ was not the son of God till after his baptism; and that he was not of the house of David and tribe of Judah, because, according to the gospel he cited, the Virgin herself was not of this tribe, but of the tribe of Levi, her father being a priest of the name of Joachim. It was likewise from this gospel that the sect of the Collyridians established the worship and offering of manchet bread and cracknels, or fine wafers, as sacrifices to Mary, whom they imagined to have been born of a virgin, as Christ is related in the canonical gospels to have been born of her. Epiphanius likewise cites a passage concerning the death of Zacharias, which is not in Jerome's copy, viz. "That it was the occasion of the death of Zacharias, in the temple, that when he had seen a vision, he, through surprise, was willing to disclose it, and his mouth was stopped. That which he saw was at the time of his offering incense,

and it was a man standing in the form of an ass. When he was gone out, and had a mind to speak thus to the people. Wo unto you ; whom do you worship ? he who had appeared to him in the temple took away the use of his speech. Afterward, when he recovered it, and was able to speak, he declared this to the Jews, and they slew him. They add that on this very account the high-priest was appointed by their lawgiver (by God to Moses) to carry little bells, that whensoever he went into the temple to sacrifice, he whom they worshiped, hearing the noise of the bells, might have time enough to hide himself, and not be caught in that ugly shape and figure."

CHAPTER I.

1. The blessed and ever-glorious Virgin Mary, sprung from the royal race and family of David, was born in the city of Nazareth, and educated at Jerusalem, in the temple of the Lord.

2. Her father's name was Joachim, and her mother's Anna. The family of her father was of Galilee and the city of Nazareth. The family of her mother was of Bethlehem.

3. Their lives were plain and right in the sight of the Lord, pious and faultless before men ; for they divided all their substance into three parts :

4. One of which they devoted to the temple and officers of the temple ; another they distributed among strangers and persons in poor circumstances ; and the third they reserved for themselves and the uses of their own family.

5. In this manner they lived for about twenty years chastely, in the favor of God, and the esteem of men, without any children.

6. But they vowed, if God should favor them with any issue, they would devote it to the service of the Lord ; on which account they went at every feast in the year to the temple of the Lord.

7. And it came to pass that when the feast of the dedication drew near, Joachim, with some others of his tribe, went up to Jerusalem, and at that time Issachar was high-priest ;

8. Who, when he saw Joachim, along with the rest of his neighbors, bringing his offerings, despised both him and his offerings, and asked him,

9. Why he, who had no children, would presume to appear among those who had ? adding that his offerings could never be acceptable to God, who was judged by him unworthy to have children ; the Scripture having said, Cursed is every one who shall not beget a male in Israel.

10. He further said that he ought first to be free from that curse by begetting some issue, and then come with his offerings into the presence of God.

11. But Joachim, being much confounded with the shame of such reproach, retired to the shepherds, who were with the cattle in their pastures ;

12. For he was not inclined to return home, lest his neighbors, who were present and heard all this from the high-priest, should publicly reproach him in the same manner.

CHAPTER II.

1. But when he had been there for some time, on a certain day, when he was alone, the angel of the Lord stood by him with a prodigious light;

2. To whom, being troubled at the appearance, the angel who had appeared to him, endeavoring to compose him, said,

3. Be not afraid, Joachim, nor troubled at the sight of me, for I am an angel of the Lord, sent by him to you, that I might inform you that your prayers are heard, and your alms ascended in the sight of God.

4. For he hath surely seen your shame, and heard you unjustly reproached for not having children; for God is the avenger of sin, and not of nature;

5. And so when he shuts the womb of any person he does it for this reason: that he may, in a more wonderful manner again, open it, and that which is born appear to be not the product of lust, but the gift of God.

6. For the first mother of your nation, Sarah, was she not barren even till her eightieth year, and yet, even in the end of her old age, brought forth Isaac, in whom the promise was made of a blessing to all nations?

7. Rachel also, so much in favor with God, and beloved so much by holy Jacob, continued barren for a long time, yet afterward was the mother of Joseph, who was not only governor of Egypt, but delivered many nations from perishing with hunger.

8. Who, among the judges, was more valiant than Samson, or more holy than Samuel? And yet both their mothers were barren.

9. But if reason will not convince you of the truth of my words that there are frequent conceptions in advanced years, and that those who were barren have brought forth to their great surprise, therefore Anna your wife shall bring you a daughter, and you shall call her name Mary.

10. She shall, according to your vow, be devoted to the Lord from her infancy, and be filled with the Holy Ghost from her mother's womb.

11. She shall neither eat nor drink anything which is unclean, nor shall her conversation be without among the common people, but in the temple of the Lord, that so she may not fall under any slander or suspicion of what is bad.

12. So in the process of her years, as she shall be in a miraculous manner born of one that was barren, so she shall, while yet a virgin, in a way unparalleled, bring forth the son of the most High God, who shall be called Jesus, and according to the signification of his name, be the Savior of all nations.

13. And this shall be a sign to you of the things which I declare, namely, when you come to the golden gate of Jerusalem you shall there meet your wife Anna, who, being very much troubled that you returned no sooner, shall then rejoice to see you.

14. When the angel had said this he departed from him.

The following chapter describes the visit of the Angel Gabriel to the Virgin:

CHAPTER VII.

1. Now, at this time of her first coming into Galilee, the angel Gabriel was sent to her from God to declare to her the conception of our Savior, and the manner and way of her conceiving him.

2. Accordingly going in to her he filled the chamber where she was with a prodigious light, and in a most courteous manner saluting her, he said :

3. Hail, Mary ! Virgin of the Lord most acceptable ! O Virgin full of grace ! The Lord is with you ; you are blessed above all women, you are blessed above all men, that have been hitherto born.

4. But the Virgin, who had before been well acquainted with the countenances of angels, and to whom such light from heaven was no uncommon thing,

5. Was neither terrified with the vision of the angel nor astonished at the greatness of the light, but only troubled about the angel's words ;

6. And began to consider what so extraordinary a salutation should mean, what it did portend, or what sort of end it would have.

7. To this thought the angel, divinely inspired, replies :

8. Fear not, Mary, as though I intended anything inconsistent with your chastity in this salutation,

9. For you have found favor with the Lord, because you made virginity your choice.

10. Therefore, while you are a virgin, you shall conceive without sin, and bring forth a son.

11. He shall be great, because he shall reign from sea to sea, and from the rivers even to the ends of the earth.

12. And he shall be called the Son of the Highest ; for he who is born in a mean state on earth reigns in an exalted one in heaven.

13. And the Lord shall give him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end.

14. For he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and his throne is forever and ever.

15. To this discourse of the angel the Virgin replied, not as though she were unbelieving, but willing to know the manner of it :

16. She said, How can that be ? For seeing, according to my vow, I never have known any man, how can I bear a child without the addition of a man's seed ?

17. To this the angel replied and said, Think not, Mary, that you shall conceive in the ordinary way.

18. For, without lying with a man, while a Virgin you shall conceive ; while a Virgin you shall bring forth ; and while a Virgin shall give suck ;

19. For the Holy Ghost shall come upon you, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow you, without any of the heats of lust.

20. So that which shall be born of you shall be only holy, because it only is conceived without sin, and being born, shall be called the son of God.

21. Then Mary, stretching forth her hands, and lifting her eyes to heaven, said, Behold the handmaid of the Lord ! Let it be unto me according to thy word.

THE PROTEVANGELION purports to be a historical account of the Birth of Christ, and the perpetual Virgin Mary, his mother. This gospel is ascribed to James. The allusions to it in the ancient Fathers are frequent, and their expressions indicate that it had obtained a very general credit in the Chris-

tian world. The controversies founded upon it chiefly relate to the age of Joseph at the birth of Christ, and to his being a widower, with children, before his marriage with the Virgin. It seems material to remark that the legends of the latter ages affirm the virginity of Joseph, notwithstanding Epiphanius, Hilary, Chrysostom, Cyril, Euthymius, Theophylact, Oecumenius, and indeed all the Latin Fathers till Ambrose, and the Greek Fathers afterward, maintain the opinions of Joseph's age and family, founded upon their belief in the authenticity of this book. It is supposed to have been originally composed in Hebrew. Postellus brought the manuscripts of this gospel from the Levant, translated it into Latin, and sent it to Oporinus, a printer at Basil, where Bibliander, a Protestant divine, and the Professor of Divinity at Zurich, caused it to be printed in 1552. Postellus asserts that it was publicly read as canonical in the Eastern churches, they making no doubt that James was the author of it. It is, nevertheless, considered apocryphal by some of the most learned divines in the Protestant and Catholic churches.

The latter part of Chapter ix contains the story of the Virgin as follows :

CHAPTER IX.

18. And when she had wrought her purple, she carried it to the high-priest, and the high-priest blessed her, saying, Mary, the Lord God hath magnified thy name, and thou shalt be blessed in all the ages of the world.

19. Then Mary, filled with joy, went away to her cousin Elizabeth, and knocked at the door.

20. Which when Elizabeth heard, she ran and opened to her, and blessed her, and said, Whence is this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come unto me?

21. For lo! as soon as the voice of thy salutation reached my ears, that which is in me leaped and blessed thee.

22. But Mary, being ignorant of all those mysterious things which the archangel Gabriel had spoken to her, lifted up her eyes to heaven, and said, Lord, what am I, that all the generations of the earth should call me blessed?

23. But perceiving herself daily to grow big, and being afraid, she went home, and hid herself from the children of Israel; and was fourteen years old when all these things happened.

CHAPTER X.

1. And when her sixth month was come, Joseph returned from his building houses abroad, which was his trade, and, entering into the house, found the Virgin grown big.

2. Then smiting upon his face, he said, With what face can I look up to the Lord my God? or what shall I say concerning this young woman?

3. For I received her a virgin out of the temple of the Lord my God, and have not preserved her such!

4. Who has thus deceived me? Who has committed this evil in my house, and seducing the Virgin from me, hath defiled her?

5. Is not the history of Adam exactly accomplished in me?

6. For in the very instant of his glory, the serpent came, and found Eve alone, and seduced her.

7. Just after the same manner it has happened to me.

8. Then Joseph, arising from the ground, called her, and said, O thou who hast been so much favored by God, why hast thou done this?

9. Why hast thou thus debased thy soul, who was educated in the Holy of Holies, and received thy food from the hand of angels?

10. But she, with a flood of tears, replied, I am innocent, and have known no man.

11. Then said Joseph, How comes it to pass you are with child?

12. Mary answered, As the Lord my God liveth, I know not by what means.

13. Then Joseph was exceedingly afraid, and went away from her, considering what he should do with her; and he thus reasoned with himself:

14. If I conceal her crime, I shall be found guilty by the law of the Lord;

15. And if I discover her to the children of Israel, I fear, lest she being with child by an angel, I shall be found to betray the life of an innocent person;

16. What therefore shall I do? I will privily dismiss her.

17. Then the night was come upon him, when behold an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, and said,

18. Be not afraid to take that young woman, for that which is within her is of the Holy Ghost.

19. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins.

20. Then Joseph arose from his sleep, and glorified the God of Israel, who had shown him such favor, and preserved the Virgin.

CHAPTER XL

1. Then came Annas the scribe, and said to Joseph, Wherefore have we not seen you since your return?

2. And Joseph replied, Because I was weary after my journey, and rested the first day.

3. But Annas, turning about, perceived the Virgin big with child,

4. And went away to the priest, and told him, Joseph, in whom you placed so much confidence, is guilty of a notorious crime, in that he hath defiled the Virgin whom he received out of the temple of the Lord, and hath privately married her, not discovering it to the children of Israel.

5. Then said the priest, Hath Joseph done this?

6. Annas replied, If you send any of your servants you will find that she is with child.

7. And the servants went, and found it as he said.

8. Upon this both she and Joseph were brought to their trial; and the priest said unto her, Mary, what hast thou done?

9. Why hast thou debased thy soul, and forgot thy God, seeing thou wast brought up in the Holy of Holies, and didst receive thy food from the hands of angels, and heardest their songs?

10. Why hast thou done this?

11. To which with a flood of tears she answered, As the Lord my God liveth, I am innocent in his sight, seeing I know no man.

12. Then the priest said to Joseph, Why hast thou done this?

13. And Joseph answered, As the Lord my God liveth, I have not been concerned with her.

14. But the priest said, Lie not, but declare the truth; thou hast privately married her, and not discovered it to the children of Israel, and humbled thyself under the mighty hand (of God), that thy seed might be blessed.

15. And Joseph was silent.

16. Then said the priest (to Joseph), You must restore to the temple of the Lord the Virgin which you took thence.

17. But he wept bitterly, and the priest added, I will cause you both to drink the water of the Lord, which is for trial, and so your iniquity shall be laid open before you.

18. Then the priest took the water, and made Joseph drink, and sent him to a mountainous place.

19. And he returned perfectly well, and all the people wondered that his guilt was not discovered.

20. So the priest said, Since the Lord has not made your sins evident, neither do I condemn you.

21. So he sent them away.

22. Then Joseph took Mary, and went to his house, rejoicing and praising the God of Israel.

CHAPTER XII.

1. And it came to pass, that there went forth a decree from the Emperor Augustus, that all the Jews should be taxed who were of Bethlehem in Judea.

2. And Joseph said, I will take care that my children be taxed; but what shall I do with this young woman?

3. To have her taxed as my wife, I am ashamed; and if I tax her as my daughter, all Israel knows she is not my daughter.

4. When the time of the Lord's appointment shall come, let him do as seems good to him.

5. And he saddled the ass, and put her upon it, and Joseph and Simon followed after her, and arrived at Bethlehem within three miles.

6. Then Joseph, turning about, saw Mary sorrowful, and said within himself, Perhaps she is in pain through that which is within her.

7. But when he had turned about again, he saw her laughing, and said to her,

8. Mary, how happens it that I sometimes see sorrow and sometimes laughter and joy in thy countenance?

9. And Mary replied to him, I see two people with mine eyes, the one weeping and mourning, the other laughing and rejoicing.

10. And he went again across the way, and Mary said to Joseph, Take me down from the ass, for that which is in me presses to come forth.

11. But Joseph replied, Whither shall I take thee? for the place is desert.

12. Then said Mary again to Joseph, Take me down, for that which is within me mightily presses me.

13. And Joseph took her down.

14. And he found there a cave, and let her into it.

CHAPTER XIII.

1. And leaving her and his sons in the cave, Joseph went forth to seek a Hebrew midwife in the village of Bethlehem.

2. But as I was going (said Joseph) I looked up into the air, and I saw the clouds astonished, and the fowls of the air stopping in the midst of their flight.

3. And I looked down towards the earth, and saw a table spread, and working people sitting around it; but their hands were upon the table, and they did not move to eat.

4. They who had meat in their mouths did not eat.

5. They who lifted their hands up to their heads did not draw them back.

6. And they who lifted them up to their mouths did not put anything in.

7. But all their faces were fixed upward.

8. And I beheld the sheep dispersed, and yet the sheep stood still.

9. And the shepherd lifted up his hand to smite them, and his hand continued up.

10. And I looked unto a river, and saw the kids with their mouths close to the water, and touching it, but they did not drink.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. Then I beheld a woman coming down from the mountains, and she said to me, Where art thou going, O man?

2. And I said to her, I go to inquire for a Hebrew midwife.

3. She replied to me, Where is the woman that is to be delivered?

4. And I answered, In the cave, and she is betrothed to me.

5. Then said the midwife, Is she not thy wife?

6. Joseph answered, It is Mary, who was educated in the Holy of Holies, in the house of the Lord, and she fell to me by lot, and is not my wife, but has conceived by the Holy Ghost.

7. The midwife said, Is this true?

8. He answered, Come and see.

9. And the midwife went along with him, and stood in the cave.

10. Then a bright cloud overshadowed the cave, and the midwife said, This day my soul is magnified, for mine eyes have seen surprising things, and salvation is brought forth to Israel.

11. But on a sudden the cloud became a great light in the cave, so that their eyes could not bear it.

12. But the light gradually decreased, until the infant appeared, and sucked the breast of his mother Mary.

13. Then the midwife cried out, and said, How glorious a day is this, wherein mine eyes have seen this extraordinary sight!

14. And the midwife went out from the cave, and Salome met her.

15. And the midwife said to her, Salome, Salome, I will tell you a most prising thing which I saw.

16. A virgin hath brought forth, which is a thing contrary to nature.

17. To which Salome replied, As the Lord my God liveth, unless I receive particular proof of this matter, I will not believe that a virgin hath brought forth.

18. Then Salome went in, and the midwife said, Mary, show thyself, for a great controversy has risen concerning thee.

19. And Salome received satisfaction.

20. But her hand was withered, and she groaned bitterly.

21. And said, Wo to me, because of mine iniquity: for I have tempted the living God, and my hand is ready to drop off.

22. Then Salome made her supplication to the Lord, and said, O God of my fathers, remember me, for I am of the seed of Abraham and Isaac and Jacob.

23. Make me not a reproach among the children of Israel, but restore me sound to my parents.

24. For thou well knowest, O Lord, that I have performed many offices of charity in thy name, and have received my reward from thee.

25. Upon this an angel of the Lord stood by Salome, and said, The Lord God hath heard thy prayer; reach forth thy hand to the child, and carry him, and by that means thou shalt be restored.

26. Salome, filled with exceeding joy, went to the child, and said, I will touch him.

27. And she purposed to worship him, for she said, This is a great king, which is born in Israel.

28. And straightway Salome was cured.

29. Then the midwife went out of the cave, being approved by God.

30. And lo! a voice came to Salome, Declare not the strange things which thou hast seen, till the child shall come to Jerusalem.

31. So Salome also departed, approved by God.

THE FIRST GOSPEL OF THE INFANCY OF JESUS CHRIST.—
Mr. Henry Sike, Professor of Oriental Languages at Cambridge, first translated and published this gospel in 1697. It was received by the Gnostics, a sect of Christians in the second century, and several of its relations were credited in the following ages by other Christians, viz., Eusebius, Athanasius, Epiphanius, Chrysostom, etc. Sozomen says he was told by many, and he credits the relations, of the idols in Egypt falling down on Joseph and Mary's flight thither with Christ, and of Christ making a well to wash his clothes in a sycamore tree, from whence balsam afterward proceeded.

These stories are from this gospel. Chemnitius, out of Stipulensis, who had it from Peter Martyr, bishop of Alexandria, in the third century, says that the place in Egypt where Christ was banished is now called Matarea, about ten miles beyond Cairo; that the inhabitants constantly burn a lamp in remembrance of it; and that there is a garden of trees yielding a balsam, which was planted by Christ when a boy. M. La Crose cites a synod at Angamala, in the mountains of Malabar, A. D. 1599, which condemns this gospel as commonly read by the Nestorians in that country. Ahmed Ibn Idris, a Mohammedan divine, says it was used by some Christians in common with the other four gospels; and Ocobius de Castro mentions a Gospel of Thomas, which he says he saw and had translated to him by an Armenian archbishop at Amsterdam, that was read in very many churches of Asia and Africa as the only rule of their faith. Fabricius takes it to be this gospel. It has been supposed that Mohammed and his coadjutors used it in compiling the Koran. There are several stories believed of Christ, proceeding from this gospel, as that which Mr. Sike relates out of La Brosse's Persic Lexicon, that Christ practiced the trade of a dyer, and his working a miracle with the colors, from whence the Persian dyers honor him as their patron, and call a dye-house the shop of Christ. Sir John Chardin mentions Persian legends concerning Christ's dispute with his schoolmaster about his A B C, and his lengthening the cedar board which Joseph sawed too short.

Chapter I. relates how Jesus spoke when an infant in his cradle, saying to his mother, "Mary, I am Jesus the son of God." Afterward it re-tells the story of Mary's accouchement in the cave near Bethlehem, and of a remarkable cure performed upon an old woman, whom Joseph had induced to act as midwife, by laying her hands upon the new-born infant. Chapter II. describes the circumcision, etc. Chapter III. relates an astonishing miracle performed by the efficacy of some of the swaddling-clothes used round the body of the infant. Chapter IV. gives the flight into Egypt, and tells how the idols of that country fell down because of the presence of the remarkable child, also how devils came out of a young man's mouth, in the shape of crows and serpents, by the appli-

cation of one of the swaddling-garments to the afflicted man's head. The devils could not stand the presence of such swaddling-clothes. Chapter V. narrates leaving Egypt, and an adventure with a band of robbers. Chapter VI. tells how a woman possessed of devils was cured by looking upon the Virgin, and how a bride made dumb by a sorcerer was cured by kissing the little Jesus. Two were also cured of leprosy. Chapter VII. tells how a young man, who by sorcery had been turned into a mule, was changed into his normal condition by the little Jesus being placed on his back. Chapter VIII. gives startling adventures with robbers, a remarkable prophecy by Jesus, and the wonder of a spring being caused by him to arise in a sycamore tree, in the waters of which his mother washed his garments, as well as numerous other miracles. Chapter IX. narrates how two sick children were cured by the dirty water in which Jesus had been washed. Chapter X. recites several astonishing miracles. Chapter XI. tells how the sick child Bartholomew was miraculously restored by being laid on the bed occupied by Jesus. Chapter XII. relates how a leprous woman and a princess were healed by the application of Jesus' wash-water. Subsequent chapters, which tell much more about the little Jesus than do the canonical gospels, read as follows :

CHAPTER XIII.

1. There was also a girl who was afflicted by Satan.
2. For that cursed spirit did frequently appear to her in the shape of a dragon, and was inclined to swallow her up, and had so sucked out all her blood that she looked like a dead carcass.
3. As often as she came to herself, with her hands wringed about her head, she would cry out and say, Wo, wo is me, that there is no one to be found who can deliver me from that impious dragon !
4. Her father and mother, and all who were about her and saw her, mourned and wept over her.
5. And all who were present would especially be under sorrow and in tears when they heard her bewailing, and saying, My brethren and friends, is there no one who can deliver me from this murderer ?
6. Then the prince's daughter, who had been cured of her leprosy, hearing the complaint of that girl, went upon the top of her castle, and saw her with her hands twisted about her head, pouring out a flood of tears, and all the people that were about her in sorrow.
7. She then asked the husband of the possessed person whether his wife's mother was alive. He told her that her father and mother were both alive.

8 Then she ordered her mother to be sent to her; to whom, when she saw her coming, she said, Is this possessed girl thy daughter? She moaning and bewailing said, Yes, madam, I bore her.

9. The prince's daughter answered, Disclose the secret of her case to me, for I confess to you that I was leprous, but the Lady Mary, the mother of Jesus Christ, healed me.

10. And if you desire your daughter to be restored to her former state take her to Bethlehem and inquire for Mary, the mother of Jesus, and doubt not but your daughter will be cured; for I do not question but you will come home with great joy at your daughter's recovery.

11. As soon as ever she had done speaking, she arose and went with her daughter to the place appointed, and to Mary, and told her the case of her daughter.

12. When St. Mary had heard her story she gave her a little of the water with which she had washed the body of her son Jesus, and bade her pour it upon the body of her daughter.

13. Likewise she gave her one of the swaddling-cloths of the Lord Jesus, and said, Take this swaddling-cloth and show it to thine enemy as often as thou seest him; and she sent them away in peace.

14. After they had left that city and returned home, and the time was come in which Satan was wont to seize her, in the same moment this cursed spirit appeared to her in the shape of a huge dragon, and the girl, seeing him, was afraid.

15. The mother said to her, Be not afraid, daughter; let him alone till he come nearer to thee! then show him the swaddling-cloth which the Lady Mary gave us, and we shall see the event.

16. Satan then coming like a dreadful dragon, the body of the girl trembled for fear.

17. But as soon as he had put the swaddling-cloth upon her head and about her eyes, and showed it to him, presently there issued forth from the swaddling-cloth flames and burning coals, and fell upon the dragon.

18. O how great a miracle was this which was done! As soon as the dragon saw the swaddling-cloth of the Lord Jesus, fire went forth and was scattered upon his head and eyes, so that he cried out with a loud voice, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of Mary? Whither shall I flee from thee?

19. So he drew back much affrighted, and left the girl.

20. And she was delivered from this trouble, and sang praises and thanks to God, and with her all who were present at the working of the miracle.

CHAPTER XIV.

1. Another woman likewise lived there, whose son was possessed by Satan.

2. This boy, named Judas, as often as Satan seized him, was inclined to bite all that were present; and if he found no one else near him he would bite his own hands and other parts.

3. But the mother of this miserable boy, hearing of St. Mary and her son Jesus, arose presently, and taking her son in her arms, brought him to the Lady Mary.

4. In the mean time James and Joses had taken away the infant, the Lord Jesus, to play a proper season with other children, and when they went forth they sat down and the Lord Jesus with them.

5. Then Judas, who was possessed, came and sat down at the right hand of Jesus.

6. When Satan was acting upon him as usual, he went about to bite the Lord Jesus;

7. And because he could not do it he struck Jesus on his right side, so that he cried out.

8. And in the same moment Satan went out of the boy, and ran away like a mad dog.

9. This same boy who struck Jesus, and out of whom Satan went in the form of a dog, was Judas Iscariot, who betrayed him to the Jews.

10. And that same side, on which Judas struck him, the Jews pierced with a spear.

CHAPTER XV.

1. And when the Lord Jesus was seven years of age, he was on a certain day with other boys, his companions about the same age,

2. Who, when they were at play, made clay into several shapes, namely, asses, oxen, birds, and other figures,

3. Each boasting of his work, and endeavoring to excel the rest.

4. Then the Lord Jesus said to the boys, I will command those figures which I have made to walk.

5. And immediately they moved, and when he commanded them to return, they returned.

6. He had also made the figures of birds and sparrows, which, when he commanded to fly, did fly; and when he commanded to stand still, did stand still; and if he gave them meat and drink, they did eat and drink.

7. When at length the boys went away, and related these things to their parents, their fathers said to them, Take heed, children, for the future, of his company, for he is a sorcerer; shun and avoid him, and from henceforth never play with him.

8. On a certain day also, when the Lord Jesus was playing with the boys, and running about, he passed by a dyer's shop, whose name was Salem:

9. And there were in his shop many pieces of cloth belonging to the people of that city, which they designed to dye of several colors.

10. Then the Lord Jesus, going into the dyer's shop, took all the cloths and threw them into the furnace.

11. When Salem came home, and saw the cloths spoiled, he began to make a great noise, and to chide the Lord Jesus, saying,

12. What hast thou done to me, O thou son of Mary? Thou hast injured both me and my neighbors; they all desired their cloths of a proper color; but thou hast come and spoiled them all.

13. The Lord Jesus replied, I will change the color of every cloth to what color thou desirest;

14. And then he presently began to take the cloths out of the furnace, and they were all dyed of those same colors which the dyer desired;

15. And when the Jews saw this surprising miracle they praised God.

CHAPTER XVI.

1. And Joseph, wheresoever he went in the city, took the Lord Jesus with him, where he was sent for to work, to make gates, or milk-pails, or sieves, or bores; the Lord Jesus was with him wheresoever he went.

2. And as often as Joseph had anything in his work to make longer or shorter or wider or narrower the Lord Jesus would stretch his hand towards it,

3. And presently it became as Joseph would have it.

4. So that he had no need to finish anything with his own hands, for he was not very skilful at his carpenter's trade.

5. On a certain time the king of Jerusalem sent for him, and said, I would have thee make me a throne, of the same dimensions with that place in which I commonly sit.

6. Joseph obeyed, and forthwith began the work, and continued two years in the king's palace before he finished it.

7. And when he came to fix it in its place, he found it wanted two spans on each side of the appointed measure.

8. Which when the king saw, he was very angry with Joseph.

9. And Joseph, afraid of the king's anger, went to bed without his supper, taking not anything to eat.

10. Then the Lord Jesus asked him what he was afraid of.

11. Joseph replied, Because I have lost my labor in the work which I have been about these two years.

12. Jesus said to him, Fear not, neither be cast down;

13. Do thou lay hold on one side of the throne, and I will the other, and we will bring it to its just dimensions.

14. And when Joseph had done as the Lord Jesus said, and each of them had with strength drawn his side, the throne obeyed, and was brought to the proper dimensions of the place.

15. Which miracle, when they who stood by saw, they were astonished, and praised God.

16. The throne was made of the same wood which was in being in Solomon's time, namely, wood adorned with various shapes and figures.

CHAPTER XVII.

1. On another day the Lord Jesus, going out into the street, and seeing some boys who were met to play, joined himself to their company.

2. But when they saw him, they hid themselves and left him to seek for them.

3. The Lord Jesus came to the gate of a certain house, and asked some women who were standing there, where the boys were gone.

4. And when they answered that there was no one there, the Lord Jesus said, Who are those whom ye see in the furnace?

5. They answered they were kids of three years old.

6. Then Jesus cried out aloud, and said, Come out hither, O ye kids, to your shepherd.

7. And presently the boys came forth like kids, and leaped about him ; which when the women saw, they were exceedingly amazed, and trembled.

8. Then they immediately worshiped the Lord Jesus, and beseeched him, saying, O our Lord Jesus, son of Mary, thou art truly that good shepherd of Israel ! have mercy on thy handmaids, who stand before thee, who do not doubt but that thou, O Lord, art come to save, and not to destroy.

9. After that, when the Lord Jesus said, The children of Israel are like Ethiopians among the people ; the women said, Thou, Lord, knowest all things ; nor is any thing concealed from thee ; but now we entreat thee, and beseech of thy mercy, that thou wouldst restore those boys to their former state.

10. Then Jesus said, Come hither, O boys, that we may go and play ; and immediately, in the presence of these women, the kids were changed, and returned into the shape of boys.

CHAPTER XVIII.

1. In the month Adar Jesus gathered together the boys, and ranked them as though he had been a king.

2. For they spread their garments on the ground for him to sit on ; and having made a crown of flowers put it upon his head, and stood on his right and left as the guards of a king.

3. And if any one happened to pass by, they took him by force, and said, Come hither, and worship the king, that you may have a prosperous journey.

4. In the mean time, while these things were doing, there came certain men, carrying a boy upon a couch ;

5. For this boy, having gone with his companions to the mountain to gather wood, and having found there a partridge's nest, and put his hand in to take out the eggs, was stung by a poisonous serpent, which leaped out of the nest ; so that he was forced to cry out for the help of his companions ; who, when they came, found him lying upon the earth like a dead person.

6. After which his neighbors came and carried him back into the city.

7. But when they came to the place where the Lord Jesus was sitting like a king, and the other boys stood around him like his ministers, the boys made haste to meet him who was bitten by the serpent, and said to his neighbors, Come and pay your respects to the king.

8. But when, by reason of their sorrow, they refused to come, the boys drew them and forced them against their wills to come.

9. And when they came to the Lord Jesus, he inquired on what account they carried that boy.

10. And when they answered that a serpent had bitten him, the Lord Jesus said to the boys, Let us go and kill that serpent.

11. But when the parents of the boy desired to be excused, because their son lay at the point of death, the boys made answer and said, Did not ye hear what the king said ? Let us go and kill the serpent ? and will not ye obey him ?

12. So they brought the couch back again, whether they would or not.

13. And when they were come to the nest, the Lord Jesus said to the boys, Is this the serpent's lurking place ? They said it was.

14. Then the Lord Jesus calling the serpent, it presently came forth and submitted to him; to whom he said, Go and suck out all the poison which thou hast infused into that boy.

15. So the serpent crept to that boy and took away all its poison again.

16. Then the Lord Jesus cursed the serpent, so that it immediately burst asunder and died.

17. And he touched the boy with his hand to restore him to his former health.

18. And when he began to cry, the Lord Jesus said, Cease crying, for hereafter thou shalt be my disciple.

19. And this is that Simon the Canaanite who is mentioned in the gospel.

CHAPTER XIX.

1. On another day Joseph sent his son James to gather wood, and the Lord Jesus went with him.

2. And when they came to the place where the wood was, and James began to gather it, behold a venomous viper bit him, so that he began to cry and make a noise.

3. The Lord Jesus, seeing him in this condition, came to him and blowed upon the place where the viper had bit him, and it was instantly well.

4. On a certain day the Lord Jesus was with some boys, who were playing on the housetop, and one of the boys fell down and presently died.

5. Upon which the other boys all running away, the Lord Jesus was left alone on the housetop.

6. And the boy's relations came to him, and said to the Lord Jesus, Thou didst throw our son from the housetop.

7. But he denying it, they cried out, Our son is dead, and this is he who killed him.

8. The Lord Jesus replied to them, Do not charge me with a crime, of which you are not able to convict me, but let us go ask the boy himself, who will bring the truth to light.

9. Then the Lord Jesus, going down, stood over the head of the dead boy, and said with a loud voice, Zeinunus, Zeinunus, who threw thee down from the housetop?

10. Then the dead boy answered, Thou didst not throw me down, but such a one did.

11. And when the Lord Jesus bade those who stood by take notice of his words, all who were present praised God on account of that miracle.

12. On a certain time the Lady St. Mary had commanded the Lord Jesus to fetch her some water out of the well.

13. And when he had gone to fetch the water, the pitcher, when it was brought up full, brake.

14. But Jesus, spreading his mantle, gathered up the water again, and brought it in that to his mother.

15. Who, being astonished at this wonderful thing, laid up this, and all the other things which she had seen, in her memory.

16. Again, on another day the Lord Jesus was with some boys by a river, and they drew water out of the river by little channels, and made little fish pools.

17. But the Lord Jesus had made twelve sparrows, and placed them about his pool on each side, three on a side.

18. But it was the Sabbath day, and the son of Hanani, a Jew, came by, and saw them making these things, and said, Do ye thus make figures of clay on the Sabbath? And he ran to them and broke down their fish-pools.

19. But when the Lord Jesus clapped his hands over the sparrows which he had made, they fled away chirping.

20. At length the son of Hanani coming to the fish-pool of Jesus to destroy it, the water vanished away, and the Lord Jesus said to him,

21. In like manner as this water has vanished, so shall thy life vanish; and presently the boy died.

22. Another time, when the Lord Jesus was coming home in the evening with Joseph, he met a boy, who ran so hard against him that he threw him down.

23. To whom the Lord Jesus said, As thou hast thrown me down, so shalt thou fall, nor ever rise.

24. And that moment the boy fell down and died.

CHAPTER XX.

1. There was also at Jerusalem one named Zaccheus, who was a schoolmaster.

2. And he said to Joseph, Joseph, why dost thou not send Jesus to me, that he may learn his letters?

3. Joseph agreed, and told St. Mary.

4. So they brought him to that master; who, as soon as he saw him, wrote out an alphabet for him.

5. And he bade him say Aleph; and when he had said Aleph, the master bade him pronounce Beth.

6. Then the Lord Jesus said, Tell me first the meaning of the letter Aleph, and then I will pronounce Beth.

7. And when the master threatened to whip him, the Lord Jesus explained to him the meaning of the letters Aleph and Beth.

8. Also which were the straight figures of the letters, which the oblique, and what letters had double figures; which had points, and which had none; why one letter went before another; and many other things he began to tell him, and explain, of which the master himself had never heard nor read in any book.

9. The Lord Jesus further said to the master, Take notice how I say to thee; then he began clearly and distinctly to say Aleph, Beth, Gimel, Daleth, and so on to the end of the alphabet.

10. At this the master was so surprised that he said, I believe this boy was born before Noah.

11. And turning to Joseph, he said, Thou hast brought a boy to me to be taught, who is more learned than any master.

12. He said also to St. Mary, This your son has no need of any learning.

13. They brought him then to a more learned master who, when he saw him, said, Say Aleph.

14. And when he had said Aleph, the master bade him pronounce Beth, to which the Lord Jesus replied, Tell me first the meaning of the letter Aleph, and then I will pronounce Beth.

15. But this master, when he lift up his hand to whip him, had his hand presently withered, and he died.

16. Then said Joseph to St. Mary, Henceforth we will not allow him to go out of the house, for everyone who displeases him is killed.

CHAPTER XXI.

1. And when he was twelve years old they brought him to Jerusalem to the feast, and when the feast was over they returned.

2. But the Lord Jesus continued behind in the temple among the doctors and elders, and chief men of Israel, to whom he proposed several questions of learning, and also gave them answers :

3. For he said to them, Whose son is the Messiah ? They answered, the son of David.

4. Why then, said he, does he in the spirit call him Lord, when he saith, The Lord said to my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand till I have made thine enemies thy footstool ?

5. Then a certain principal Rabbi asked him, Hast thou read books ?

6. Jesus answered he had read both books and the things which were contained in books.

7. And he explained to them the books of the law and precepts and statutes, and the mysteries which are contained in the books of the prophets ; things which the mind of no creature could reach.

8. Then said that Rabbi, I never yet have seen or heard of such knowledge What do you think that boy will be ?

9. When a certain astronomer, who was present, asked the Lord Jesus whether he had studied astronomy,

10. The Lord Jesus replied, and told him the number of the spheres and heavenly bodies, as also their triangular, square, and sextile aspect ; their progressive and retrograde motion ; their size, and several prognostications ; and other things which the reason of man had never discovered.

11. There was also among them a philosopher, well skilled in physick and natural philosophy, who asked the Lord Jesus whether he had studied physica.

12. He replied, and explained to him physics and metaphysics ;

13. Also, those things which were above and below the power of nature ;

14. The powers also of the body, its humors and their effects ;

15. Also the number of its members, and bones, veins, arteries, and nerves ;

16. The several constitutions of the body, hot and dry, cold and moist, and the tendencies of them ;

17. How the soul operated upon the body ;

18. What its various sensations and faculties were ;

19. The faculties of speaking, anger, desire ;

20. And lastly, the manner of its composition and dissolution ; and other things, which the understanding of no creature had ever reached.

21. Then that philosopher arose, and worshiped the Lord Jesus, and said, O Lord Jesus, from henceforth I will be thy disciple and servant.

22. While they were discoursing on these and such like things, the Lady St. Mary came in, having been three days walking about with Joseph, seeking for him.

23. And when she saw him sitting among the doctors, and in his turn proposing questions to them, and giving answers, she said to him, My son, why hast thou done thus by us? Behold, I and thy father have been at much pains in seeking thee.

24. He replied, Why did ye seek me? Did ye not know that I ought to be employed in my father's house?

25. But they understood not the words which he said to them.

26. Then the doctors asked Mary whether this were her son. And when she said he was, they said, O happy Mary, who hast borne such a son.

27. Then he returned with them to Nazareth, and obeyed them in all things.

28. And his mother kept all these sayings in her mind.

29. And the Lord Jesus grew in stature and wisdom, and favor with God and man.

CHAPTER XXII.

1. Now from this time Jesus began to conceal his miracles and secret works,

2. And gave himself to the study of the law, till he arrived to the end of his thirtieth year;

3. At which time the Father publicly owned him at Jordan, sending down this voice from heaven, This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased;

4. The Holy Ghost being also present in the form of a dove.

5. This is he whom we worship with all reverence, because he gave us our life and being, and brought us from our mother's womb;

6. Who, for our sakes, took a human body, and hath redeemed us, that so he might embrace us with everlasting mercy, and show his free, large, bountiful grace and goodness to us.

7. To him be glory and praise, and power and dominion, from henceforth and for evermore. Amen.

THOMAS'S GOSPEL OF THE INFANCY OF JESUS CHRIST.—
The original in Greek, from which this translation is made, will be found printed by Cotelarius, in his notes on the constitutions of the apostles, from a MS. in the French King's Library, No. 2279. It is attributed to Thomas, and conjectured to have been originally connected with the Gospel of Mary.

CHAPTER I.

1. I, Thomas, an Israelite, judged it necessary to make known to our brethren among the Gentiles the actions and miracles of Christ in his childhood, which our Lord and God Jesus Christ wrought after his birth in Bethlehem in our country at which I myself was astonished; the beginning of which was as followeth:

2. When the child Jesus was five years of age, and there had been a shower of rain, which was now over, Jesus was playing with other Hebrew boys by a running stream; and the water, running over the banks, stood in little lakes;

3 But the waters instantly became clear and useful again, he having smote them only by his word; they readily obeyed him.

4. Then he took from the bank of the stream some soft clay, and formed out of it twelve sparrows; and there were other boys playing with him.

5. But a certain Jew, seeing the things which he was doing, namely, his forming clay into the figures of sparrows on the Sabbath day, went presently away, and told his father Joseph, and said,

6. Behold, thy boy is playing by the river-side, and has taken clay and formed it into twelve sparrows, and profaneth the Sabbath.

7. Then Joseph came to the place where he was, and when he saw him, called to him and said, Why doest thou that which is not lawful to do on the Sabbath day?

8. Then Jesus, clapping together the palms of his hands, called to the sparrows and said to them, Go, fly away; and while ye live remember me.

9. So the sparrows fled away, making a noise.

10. The Jews, seeing this, were astonished, and went away and told their chief persons what a strange miracle they had seen wrought by Jesus.

CHAPTER II.

1. Besides this, the son of Anna, the scribe, was standing there with Joseph, and took a bough of a willow tree and scattered the waters which Jesus had gathered into lakes.

2. But the boy Jesus, seeing what he had done, became angry and said to him, Thou fool, what harm did the lakes do thee, that thou shouldest scatter the water?

3. Behold, now thou shalt wither as a tree, and shalt not bring forth either leaves, or branches, or fruit.

4. And immediately he became withered all over.

5. Then Jesus went away home. But the parents of the boy who was withered, lamenting the misfortune of his youth, took and carried him to Joseph, accusing him, and said, Why dost thou keep a son who is guilty of such actions?

6. Then Jesus, at the request of all who were present, did heal him, leaving only some small member to continue withered, that they might take warning.

7. Another time Jesus went forth into the street, and a boy, running by, rushed upon his shoulder,

8. At which Jesus, being angry, said to him, Thou shalt go no farther.

9. And he instantly fell down dead.

10. Which, when some persons saw, they said, Where was this boy born that everything which he says presently cometh to pass?

11. Then the parents of the dead boy, going to Joseph, complained, saying, You are not fit to live with us, in our city, having such a boy as that;

12. Either teach him that he bless, and not curse, or else depart hence with him, for he kills our children.

13. Then Joseph, calling the boy Jesus by himself, instructed him, saying, Why doest thou such things to injure the people, so that they hate us and persecute us?

14. But Jesus replied, I know that what thou sayest is not of thyself, but for thy sake I will say nothing;

15. But they who have said these things to thee shall suffer everlasting punishment.

16. And immediately they who had accused him became blind.

17. And all they who saw it were exceedingly afraid and confounded, and said concerning him, Whatsoever he saith, whether good or bad, immediately cometh to pass; and they were amazed.

18. And when they saw this action of Christ, Joseph arose and plucked him by the ear, at which the boy was angry, and said to him, Be easy;

19. For if they seek for us they shall not find us; thou hast done very imprudently.

20. Dost thou not know that I am thine? Trouble me no more.

CHAPTER III.

1. A certain schoolmaster, named Zaccheus, standing in a certain place, heard Jesus speaking these things to his father;

2. And he was much surprised that, being a child, he should speak such things, and after a few days he came to Joseph and said,

3. Thou hast a wise and sensible child; send him to me that he may learn to read.

4. When he sat down to teach the letters to Jesus he began with the first letter, Aleph.

5. But Jesus pronounced the second letter Mpeth (Beth), Cghimel (Gimel), and said over all the letters to him to the end.

6. Then, opening a book, he taught his master the prophets; but he was ashamed, and was at a loss to conceive how he came to know the letters.

7. And he arose and went home, wonderfully surprised at so strange a thing.

CHAPTER IV.

1. As Jesus was passing by a certain shop he saw a young man dipping (or dying) some cloths and stockings in a furnace, of a sad color, doing them according to every person's particular order.

2. The boy Jesus, going to the young man who was doing this, took also some of the cloths * * *

Here endeth the fragment of Thomas's Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus Christ

THE EPISTLES OF JESUS CHRIST AND ABGARUS, KING OF EDESSA.—The first writer who makes any mention of the epistles that passed between Jesus Christ and Abgarus, is Eusebius, bishop of Cæsarea, in Palestine, who flourished in the early part of the fourth century. For their genuineness he appeals to the public registries and records of the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia, where Abgarus reigned, and where he affirms that he found them written in the Syriac language. He published a Greek translation of them in his Ecclesiastical History. The learned world has been much divided on this

subject; but, notwithstanding the erudite Grabe, with Archbishop Cave, Dr. Parker, and other divines, have strenuously contended for their admission into the canon of scripture, they are deemed apocryphal. The Rev. Jeremiah Jones observes that the common people in England have the epistle in their houses, in many places, fixed in a frame, with the picture of Christ before it; and that they generally, with much honesty and devotion, regard it as the word of God and the genuine Epistle of Christ.

CHAPTER I.

1. Abgarus, king of Edessa, to Jesus the good Savior, who appears at Jerusalem, greeting :
2. I have been informed concerning you and your cures, which are performed without the use of medicines and herba.
3. For it is reported that you cause the blind to see, the lame to walk, do both cleanse lepers and cast out unclean spirits and devils, and restore them to health who have been long diseased, and raisest up the dead.
4. All which when I heard, I was persuaded of one of these two, viz., either that you are God himself descended from heaven, who do these things, or the Son of God.
5. On this account, therefore, I have wrote to you, earnestly to desire you would take the trouble of a journey hither, and cure a disease which I am under.
6. For I hear the Jews ridicule you, and intend you mischief.
7. My city is indeed small, but neat, and large enough for us both.

CHAPTER II.

1. Abgarus, you are happy, forasmuch as you have believed on me, whom you have not seen.
2. For it is written concerning me, that those who have seen me should not believe on me, that they who have not seen might believe and live.
3. As to that part of your letter which relates to my giving you a visit, I must inform you that I must fulfil all the ends of my mission in this country, and after that be received up again to him who sent me.
4. But after my ascension, I will send one of my disciples, who will cure your disease, and give life to you, and all that are with you.

THE GOSPEL OF NICODEMUS, FORMERLY CALLED THE ACTS OF PONTIUS PILATE.—Although this gospel is, by some among the learned, supposed to have been really written by Nicodemus, who became a disciple of Jesus Christ, and conversed with him, others conjecture that it was a forgery, toward the close of the third century, by some zealous

believer, who, observing that there had been appeals made by the Christians of the former age to the Acts of Pilate, but that such acts could not be produced, imagined it would be of service to Christianity to fabricate and publish this gospel; as it would both confirm the Christians under persecution and convince the heathen of the truth of the Christian religion. The Rev. Jeremiah Jones says that such pious frauds were very common among Christians even in the first three centuries; and that a forgery of this nature, with the view above-mentioned, seems natural and probable. The same author, in noticing that Eusebius, in his Ecclesiastical History, charges the pagans with having forged and published a book called the Acts of Pilate, takes occasion to observe that the internal evidence of this gospel shows that it was not the work of any heathen; but that if in the latter end of the third century we find it in use among Christians (and it was certainly then read in some churches), and about the same time find a forgery of the heathen under the same title, it seems exceedingly probable that some Christians, at that time, should publish such a piece as this, in order partly to confront the spurious one of the pagans, and partly to support those appeals which had been made by former Christians to the Acts of Pilate; and Mr. Jones says he thinks so the more particularly as we have innumerable instances of forgeries by the faithful in the primitive ages, grounded on less plausible reasons. Whether it be canonical or not, it is of very great antiquity, and is appealed to by several of the ancient Christians. The present translation is made from the gospel published by Grynæus in the *Orthodoxographia*, vol. i, tom. ii, p. 643. One chapter of the twenty-two will answer as a sample.

CHAPTER I.

1. Annas and Caiphas, and Summas, and Datam, Gamaliel, Judas, Levi, Nepthalim, Alexander, Cyrus, and other Jews, went to Pilate about Jesus, accusing him with many bad crimes.

2. And said, We are assured that Jesus is the son of Joseph the carpenter, and born of Mary, and that he declares himself the Son of God, and a king; and not only so, but attempts the dissolution of the Sabbath and the laws of our fathers.

3. Pilate replied, What is it which he declares? and what is it which he attempts dissolving?

4. The Jews told him, We have a law which forbids doing cures on the Sabbath day; but he cures both the lame and the deaf, those afflicted with the palsy, the blind, and lepers, and demoniacs, on that day by wicked methods.

5. Pilate replied, How can he do this by wicked methods? They answered, He is a conjurer, and casts out devils by the prince of the devils; and so all things become subject to him.

6. Then said Pilate, Casting out devils seems not to be the work of an unclean spirit, but to proceed from the power of God.

7. The Jews replied to Pilate, We entreat your highness to summon him to appear before your tribunal, and hear him yourself.

8. Then Pilate called a messenger, and said to him, By what means will Christ be brought hither?

9. Then went the messenger forth, and, knowing Christ, worshiped him; and, having spread the cloak which he had in his hand upon the ground, he said, Lord, walk upon this, and go in, for the governor calls thee.

10. When the Jews perceived what the messenger had done, they exclaimed (against him) to Pilate, and said, Why did not you give him his summons by a beadle, and not by a messenger? for the messenger, when he saw him, worshiped him, and spread the cloak which he had in his hand upon the ground before him, and said to him, Lord, the governor calls thee.

11. Then Pilate called the messenger, and said, Why hast thou done thus?

12. The messenger replied, When thou sentest me from Jerusalem to Alexander, I saw Jesus sitting in a mean figure upon a she ass, and the children of the Hebrews cried out, Hosannah, holding bows of trees in their hands.

13. Others spread their garments in the way, and said, Save us, thou who art in heaven; blessed is he who cometh in the name of the Lord.

14. Then the Jews cried out against the messenger, and said, The children of the Hebrews made their acclamations in the Hebrew language; and how couldst thou, who art a Greek, understand the Hebrew?

15. The messenger answered them and said, I asked one of the Jews, and said, What is this which the children do cry out in the Hebrew language?

16. And he explained it to me, saying, They cry out, Hosannah, which, being interpreted is, O Lord, save me; or, O Lord, save.

17. Pilate then said to them, Why do you yourselves testify to the words spoken by the children, namely, by your silence? In what has the messenger done amiss? And they were silent.

18. Then the governor said unto the messenger, Go forth, and endeavor by any means to bring him in.

19. But the messenger went forth and did as before; and said, Lord, come in for the governor calleth thee.

20. And as Jesus was going in by the ensigns, who carried the standards, the tops of them bowed down and worshiped Jesus.

21. Whereupon the Jews exclaimed more vehemently against the ensigns.

22. But Pilate said to the Jews, I know it is not pleasing to you that the tops of the standards did of themselves bow and worship Jesus; but why do ye exclaim against the ensigns, as if they had bowed and worshiped?

23. They replied to Pilate, We saw the ensigns themselves bowing and worshipping Jesus.

24. Then the governor called the ensigns, and said unto them, Why did you do thus?

25. The ensigns said to Pilate, We are all pagans, and worship the gods in temples; and how should we think anything about worshipping him? We only held the standards in our hands, and they bowed themselves and worshiped him.

26. Then said Pilate to the rulers of the synagogue, Do ye yourselves choose some strong men, and let them hold the standards, and we shall see whether they will then bend of themselves.

27. So the elders of the Jews sought out twelve of the most strong and able old men, and made them hold the standards; and they stood in the presence of the governors.

28. Then Pilate said to the messenger, Take Jesus out, and by some means bring him in again. And Jesus and the messenger went out of the hall.

29. And Pilate called the ensigns who before had borne the standards, and swore to them that if they had not borne the standards in that manner when Jesus before entered it, he would cut off their heads.

30. Then the governor commanded Jesus to come in again.

31. And the messenger did as he had done before, and very much entreated Jesus that he would go upon his cloak, and walk on it; and he did walk upon it, and went in.

32. And when Jesus went in the standards bowed themselves as before, and worshiped him.

The remaining twenty-one chapters of the Gospel according to Nicodemus bear considerable resemblance to the four gospels in the New Testament, and go over much the same ground. It has just as much the appearance of being genuine, it sounds just as much like the word of God, as the gospels attributed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. It requires a very acute detective to find the superiority and genuineness in one over the others. The most probable conclusion is that they are all fictitious, not having been written by the persons claimed as their authors; and fictitious as to the events which they relate. All of them claim the performance of astonishing miracles, incidents wholly impossible now to be performed by all the powers known to exist, and equally as impossible eighteen hundred and fifty years ago. They were unquestionably gotten up for a specific purpose, and that purpose was to mislead ignorant people, and cause them to believe certain events took place which never had an existence in fact. In this way systems of religion have been gotten up for thousands of years. Among the ignorant portion of the earth's inhabitants wonders, marvels, and supernaturalism have been readily accepted, yes, seized upon with

avidity. These have had much to do in deluding the devotees of Christianity equally with the believers in other religious systems. The principle is much the same with all systems of religion. The devoted supporters of all these systems have given their heartiest assent to the vaguest chimeras and the most barefaced absurdities that ever existed in men's superstitions and diseased imaginations. They have accepted as truth the most impossible events, the most unnatural occurrences which priests and zealots were capable of devising.

It is hardly worth while to introduce here extracts from what, in the Apocryphal New Testament, are called the Epistles of Paul to the Laodiceans, to Seneca, and Seneca's to Paul, the two Epistles of Clement to the Corinthians, the Epistle of Barnabas, the Epistles of Ignatius to the Ephesians, the Magnesians, the Trallians, the Romans, the Philadelphians, the Symrnæans, to Polycarp, the Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, and the three books of Hermas—the Visions, Commands, and Similitudes. They are much in the same style as similar writings in the New Testament, and such as any zealous teacher might be capable of producing.

Perhaps the story of Paul and Thecla may be of sufficient interest to give the first two of the eleven chapters.

THE ACTS OF PAUL AND THECLA.—Tertullian says that this piece was forged by a Presbyter of Asia, who, being convicted, "confessed that he did it out of respect to Paul;" and Pope Gelasius, in his decree against Apocryphal books, inserted it among them. Notwithstanding this, a large part of the history was credited, and looked upon as genuine among the primitive Christians. Cyprian, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Austin, Gregory Nazianzen, Chrysostom, and Severus Sulpitius, who all lived within the fourth century, mention Thecla, or refer to her history. Basil of Seleucia wrote her acts, sufferings, and victories, in verse; and Euagrius Scholasticus, an ecclesiastical historian, about 590, relates that, "after the Emperor Zeno had abdicated his empire, and Basilik had taken possession of it, he had a vision of the holy and excellent martyr Thecla, who promised him the restoration of his empire; for which, when it was brought about, he erected

and dedicated a most noble and sumptuous temple to this famous martyr Thecla, at Seleucia, a city of Isauria, and bestowed upon it very noble endowments, which (says the author) are preserved even till this day" (Hist. Eccl., lib. 3, cap. 8). Cardinal Baronius, Locrinus, Archbishop Wake, and others, and also the learned Grabe, who edited the "Septuagint," and revived the Acts of Paul and Thecla, consider them as having been written in the Apostolic age; as containing nothing superstitious, or disagreeing from the opinions and belief of those times; and, in short, as a genuine and authentic history. Again, it is said that this is not the original book of the early Christians; but, however that may be, it is published from the Greek MS. in the Bodleian Library at Oxford, which Dr. Mills copied and transmitted to Dr. Grabe.

CHAPTER I.

1. When Paul went up to Iconium, after his flight from Antioch, Demas and Hermogenes became his companions, who were then full of hypocrisy.

2. But Paul, looking only at the goodness of God, did them no harm, but loved them greatly.

3. Accordingly he endeavored to make agreeable to them all the oracles and doctrines of Christ, and the design of the gospel of God's well-beloved son, instructing them in the knowledge of Christ as it was revealed to him.

4. And a certain man, named Onesiphorus, hearing that Paul was come to Iconium, went out speedily to meet him, together with his wife Lectra, and his sons Simmia and Zeno, to invite him to their house.

5. For Titus had given them a description of Paul's personage, they as yet not knowing him in person, but only being acquainted with his character.

6. They went in the king's highway to Lystra and stood there waiting for him, comparing all who passed by with that description which Titus had given them.

7. At length they saw a man coming (namely, Paul), of a low stature, bald (or shaved) on the head, crooked thighs, handsome legs, hollow-eyed; had a crooked nose; full of grace, for sometimes he appeared as a man, sometimes he had the countenance of an angel. And Paul saw Onesiphorus and was glad.

8. And Onesiphorus said, Hail! thou servant of the blessed God. Paul replied, The grace of God be with thee and thy family.

9. But Demas and Hermogenes were moved with envy, and under a show of great religion Demas said, And are not we also servants of the blessed God? Why didst thou not salute us?

10. Onesiphorus replied, Because I have not perceived in you the fruits of righteousness; nevertheless, if ye are of that sort, ye shall be welcome to my house also.

11. Then Paul went into the house of Onesiphorus and there was great joy among the family on that account; and they employed themselves in prayer

breaking of bread, and hearing Paul preach the word of God concerning temperance and the resurrection, in the following manner:

12. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.
13. Blessed are they who keep their flesh undefiled (or pure), for they shall be the temples of God.
14. Blessed are the temperate (or chaste), for God will reveal himself to them.
15. Blessed are they who abandon their secular enjoyments, for they shall be accepted of God.
16. Blessed are they who have wives, as though they had them not, for they shall be made angels of God.
17. Blessed are they who tremble at the word of God, for they shall be comforted.
18. Blessed are they who keep their baptism pure, for they shall find peace with the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
19. Blessed are they who pursue the wisdom (or doctrine) of Jesus Christ, for they shall be called the sons of the Most High.
20. Blessed are they who observe the instructions of Jesus Christ, for they shall dwell in eternal light.
21. Blessed are they who for the love of Christ abandon the glories of the world, for they shall judge angels, and be placed at the right hand of Christ, and shall not suffer the bitterness of the last judgment.
22. Blessed are the bodies and souls of virgins, for they are acceptable to God, and shall not lose the reward of their virginity, for the word of their (heavenly) Father shall prove effectual to their salvation in the day of his son, and they shall enjoy rest for evermore.

CHAPTER II.

1. While Paul was preaching this sermon in the church which was in the house of Onesiphorus, a certain virgin, named Thecla (whose mother's name was Theoclia, and who was betrothed to a man named Thamyras), sat at a certain window in her house,

2. From whence, by the advantage of a window in the house where Paul was, she both night and day heard Paul's sermons concerning God, concerning charity, concerning faith in Christ, and concerning prayer.

3. Nor would she depart from the window till with exceeding joy she was subdued to the doctrines of faith.

4. At length, when she saw many women and virgins going in to Paul, she earnestly desired that she might be thought worthy to appear in his presence and hear the word of Christ, for she had not yet seen Paul's person, but only heard his sermons, and that alone.

5. But when she would not be prevailed upon to depart from the window, her mother sent to Thamyras, who came with the greatest pleasure, as hoping now to marry her. Accordingly, he said to Theoclia, Where is my Thecla?

6. Theoclia replied, Thamyras, I have something very strange to tell you; for Thecla, for the space of three days, will not move from the window, not so much as to eat or drink, but is so intent in hearing the artful and delusive discourses of a certain foreigner, that I perfectly admire, Thamyras, that a young woman of her known modesty will suffer herself to be so prevailed upon

7. For that man has disturbed the whole city of Iconium, and even your Thecla among others. All the women and young men flock to him to receive his doctrine; who, besides all the rest, tells them that there is but one God, who alone is to be worshiped, and that we ought to live in chastity.

8. Notwithstanding this, my daughter Thecla, like a spider's web, fastened to the window, is captivated by the discourses of Paul, and attends upon them with prodigious eagerness and vast delight; and thus, by attending on what he says, the young woman is seduced. Now then do you go and speak to her, for she is betrothed to you.

9. Accordingly Thamyris went, and having saluted her, and taking care not to surprise her, he said, Thecla, my spouse, why sittest thou in this melancholy posture? What strange impressions are made upon thee? Turn to Thamyris, and blush.

10. Her mother also spake to her after the same manner, and said, Child, why dost thou sit so melancholy, and, like one astonished, makest no reply?

11. Then they wept exceedingly; Thamyris, that he had lost his spouse; Theoclia, that she had lost her daughter; and the maids, that they had lost their mistress; and there was a universal mourning in the family.

12. But all these things made no impression upon Thecla, so as to incline her so much as to turn to them, and take notice of them: for she still regarded the discourses of Paul.

13. Then Thamyris ran forth into the street, to observe who they were that went in to Paul, and came out from him; and he saw two men engaged in a very warm dispute, and said to them,

14. Sirs, what business have you here, and who is that man within, belonging to you, who deludes the minds of men, both young men and virgins, persuading them that they ought not to marry but continue as they are?

15. I promise to give you a considerable sum if ye will give me a just account of him, for I am the chief person of this city.

16. Demas and Hermogenes replied, We cannot so exactly tell who he is, but this we know, that he deprives young men of their (intended) wives, and virgins of their (intended) husbands, by teaching that there can be no future resurrection unless ye continue in chastity and do not defile your flesh.

In the continuation of the pious story Chapter III. narrates how Paul is betrayed and that Thamyris causes his arrest. Chapter IV. tells how Paul is accused before the governor by Thamyris. Paul defends himself, but is committed to prison, where Thecla visits him. Chapter V. describes how Thecla was sought and found by her relations, how Paul and Thecla were taken before the governor, by whom Thecla was ordered to be burnt, and Paul to be whipped. A large pile of wood was provided, and Thecla commanded to go upon it, which she did, first making the sign of the cross. The pile was then fired and the flames leapt high around the holy woman, but God directed them so as not to touch her. He also caused

the earth to open, which caused the death of many of the persecutors. This rupture of the earth, with the pouring down of a heavy rain from a cloud expressly prepared for the purpose, extinguished the fire, and the virgin was saved. How kind it would have been in God had he interested himself equally in the millions of innocent people who at a later date were burnt at the stake and otherwise tortured to death in the most cruel manner. Chapter VI. describes how Paul and Onesiphorus concealed themselves in a cave, where Thecla found them while engaged in prayer. She wishes to follow Paul, but he advised not, for fear of fornication. Chapter VII. narrates the journey of Paul and Thecla to Antioch. Alexander, a magistrate, falls in love with Thecla; he kisses her by force; she resists him; is carried before the governor, and is condemned to be thrown to wild beasts. Chapter VIII.: Thecla is entertained by Trifina. When thrown to the wild beasts a she-lion licked her feet. In obedience to a vision Trifina adopts Thecla, but she is again taken to the amphitheater. Chapter IX. describes how Thecla was thrown naked to the wild beasts, but they all refuse to attack her. She threw herself into a pit of water where were sea-calves, but they were struck by lightning and killed. Fresh wild beasts were turned loose upon her, but they refused to touch her. She was next fastened by cords to a wild and furious bull, which was rendered more furious by burning him with hot irons. The cords, however, were burned asunder, and Thecla became free. The governor, perceiving she was protected and saved by the power of God, set her at liberty. Chapter X. relates how Thecla visited Paul and her mother, who repulsed her. A bright cloud conducted her to a mountainous wilderness, where she abode many years and was sorely tempted by the devil. Here people flocked to her, and she taught them about Jesus, and performed many miraculous cures. No sooner did they approach the mouth of the cave she occupied than they were instantly cured. Devils were also cast out in the same way. In consequence of the many cures she performed, the physicians in that locality had nothing to do and therefore wished to destroy the virgin. The final chapter, XI., relates how the devil influenced bad men to go to the cave of

the virgin with the purpose of ravishing her, but she escaped in a most miraculous manner by the rock of the cave opening, taking her in, and then closing again, thus shielding her completely from her enemies. Her life was prolonged till she was ninety years of age, when God translated her.

This extremely improbable story has nothing to sustain it, but just as much as have the equally improbable stories which make up the Old and New Testament canons. All are probably alike pious inventions written to increase the faith and religious reverence of credulous devotees.

CANONS OF CRITICISM.

The rules applied by Dr. Lardner in judging of the comparative claims of canonical and uncanonical gospels are stated as follows :

1. Canonical and apocryphal gospels are competitive, *i. e.*, they are reciprocally destructive of each other's pretensions.
2. If the canonical gospels are authentic, the apocryphal gospels are forgeries.
3. If the apocryphal gospels are authentic, the canonical gospels are forgeries.
4. No consideration of the comparative merits or characters of the competitive works can have place in the consideration of their claims to authenticity.
5. Those writings, whichever they be, or whether they be the better or the worse, which can be shown to have been written *first* have the superior claim to authenticity.
6. It is impossible that those writings which were the first could have been written to disparage or supersede those which were written after.
7. Those writings which have the less appearance of art and contrivance are the first.
8. Those writings which exhibit a more rhetorical construction of language in the detail of the same events, with explanations, suppressions, and variations, whose evident scope is to render the story more probable, are the later writings.
9. Those writings whose existence is acknowledged by the others, but which themselves acknowledge not those others, are unquestionably the first.

10. There could be no conceivable object or purpose in putting forth writings which were much worse after the world were in possession of such as were much better.

11. If the story were not true in the first way of telling it, no improvement in the way of telling it could render it true.

12. If those who were only improvers upon the original history have concealed that fact, and have suffered mankind to understand that the *improvements* were the *originals*, they are guilty and wicked forgers, and never could have had any other or better intentions than to mislead and deceive mankind.

DATA OF CRITICISM

To be applied in judging the comparative claims of the apocryphal and canonical gospels:

1. It is manifest and admitted on all hands that the apocryphal gospels are very silly and artless compositions, "full of pious frauds and fabulous wonders" (Mosheim).

2. It is manifest and admitted on all hands that the canonical gospels exhibit a more rhetorical construction of language than the apocryphal, and have a highly-wrought sublimity and grandeur, the like of which is nowhere to be found in any of the apocryphal gospels. [This, probably, is not so apparent to an unprejudiced observer.]

3. The canonical gospels, but more especially the canonical epistles, which are admitted to have been written *before* the gospels, do in very many places acknowledge the existence and prevalence of those writings which are now called apocryphal.

4. The apocryphal gospels, so far as we have any traces of them left, do nowhere recognize or acknowledge the writings which we now call canonical.

5. The apocryphal gospels are quoted by the very earliest Fathers, orthodox as well as heretical, as reverentially as those which are now called canonical.

6. The apocryphal gospels are admitted in the New Testament itself to have been universally received, and to have been the guide and rule of faith to the whole Christian world before any one of our present canonical gospels was in existence.

COROLLARIES.—1. Indications of time, discovered in those gospels which were written first, will indicate time *relatively* to those which were written afterward—*exempli gratiâ*. It being proved that the legend A was written before the legend C, there will be proof that events which were contemporary or antecedent to the writing of A, were antecedent, *a fortiori*, to the writing of C.

2. Indications of a prevalence of a *state of things* existing when the earlier gospels were written will indicate relatively the state of things when the later gospels were written—*exempli gratiâ*. It being proved that the earlier gospels were written under the universal prevalence of notions and doctrines of monkery, there will be proof of the monkish character necessarily derived to the gospels, derived from those gospels.

In connection with all this the reader is requested to bear in mind that, as abundantly proved by Prof. Newman in "Supernatural Religion," and by R. W. Greg in the "Creed of Christendom," neither of the four gospels in the New Testament canon were known to have an existence till the year 170, or one hundred years after the time Jesus was said to have left the world, while some of the so-called apocryphal gospels were in use in the churches before that time.

In connection, also, with this subject, it is well to call to mind the admissions made by some of the early Christians of distinction. Bishop Faustus, in the fourth century, was a learned man, and stood high, authoritatively, in the sect of Manicheans, to which he belonged. In a doctrinal controversy with Augustine he boldly pressed upon the saint this challenge: "It is certain that the New Testament was not written by Christ himself, nor by his apostles, but a long while after them by some unknown persons, who, lest they should not be credited when they wrote of affairs they were little acquainted with, affixed to their works the names of apostles, or of such as were supposed to have been their companions, asserting that what they had written themselves was written according to those persons to whom they ascribed it."

This eminent Christian in the foregoing remarks gave utterance to an important, though damaging, truth, and which

applies with equal force to each of the four gospels in the New Testament canon. They were compiled from fragmentary legends by persons wholly unknown to the world; and to give them character, and to insure their recognition and acceptance by the credulous, the name of a distinguished apostle or some companion of an apostle was given them. This is the great truth about the four gospels. Examine the evidence as much as we will, no other conclusion can be honestly arrived at.

FACTS WORTH REMEMBERING.

1. When Bishop Faustus wrote those words no canon of the New Testament gospels and epistles had yet been agreed upon. Over two hundred gospels and epistles stood on about an equal footing.

2. "No manuscript of these writings [the canonical gospels] now in existence is prior to the sixth century; and various readings which, as it appears from the quotations of the Fathers, were in the text of the Greek Testament are to be found in none of the manuscripts which are at present remaining" (Michaelis, vol. ii., p. 160).

3. Many passages which are now found in these scriptures were not contained in any ancient copies whatever.

4. "In our common editions of the Greek Testament are many readings which exist not in a single manuscript, but are founded on mere conjecture" (Marsh's Michaelis, vol. ii, p. 496.)

5. "It is notorious that the orthodox charge the heretics with corrupting the text, and that the heretics recriminate upon the orthodox." [Both were correct.] (Unitarian New Version.)

6. "It is an undoubted fact that heretics were in the right in many points of criticism, when the Fathers accused them of wilful corruption" (Bp, Marsh, vol. ii, p. 362).

7. "It is notorious that forged writings under the names of the apostles were in circulation almost from the apostolic age." (See 2 Thess. ii, 2, quoted in Unitarian New Version.)

8. "Not long after Christ's ascension into heaven, several histories of his life and doctrines, full of pious frauds and

fabulous wonders, were composed by persons whose intentions, perhaps, were not bad, but whose writings discovered the greatest superstition and ignorance" (Mosheim, vol. i, p. 109).

9. "They put into their scriptures whatever they thought would serve their purpose" (Scaliger).

10. "Notwithstanding those twelve known infallible and faithful judges of controversy [the twelve apostles], there were as many and as damnable heresies crept in, even in the apostolic age, as in any other age, perhaps, during the same space of time" (Reeve's Preliminary Discourse, p. 190).

11. "There were in the manuscripts of the New Testament, at the time of the editing the last printed copies of the Greek text, upward of one hundred and thirty thousand various readings" (Unitarian New Version, p. 22).

12. "The confusion unavoidable in these versions (the ancient Latin, from which all our European versions are derived), had risen to such a height that St. Jerome, in his preface to the gospels, complains that no one copy resembled another" (Michaelis, vol. ii, p. 119).

13. "The gospels flatly contradict each other; that is, in several important particulars, they do to such an extent as no ingenuity of supposition has yet been able to reconcile; only the most stupid and ignorant of Methodist parsons, and canting, arrogant fanatics any longer attempting to reconcile them, after Marsh, Michaelis, and the most learned critics, have struck and owned the conquest."

14. "The difference of character between the first three gospels and that ascribed to St. John is so flagrantly egregious that the most learned Christian divines and profoundest scholars have frankly avowed that the Jesus Christ of St. John is a wholly different character from the Jesus Christ of Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and that their account and his should both be true is flatly impossible" (Corol. Theoph. Bretschneider Probab. Lipsiæ, 1820).

15. "Such was the idolatrous adulation paid to the authority of Origen that emendations of the text which were but suggested by him were taken in as part of the New Testament, though he himself acknowledged that they were sup-

ported by the authority of no manuscript whatever" (Bp. Marsh).

16. "Even so late as the period of the Reformation we have whole passages which have been thrust into the text and thrust out, just as it served the turn which the Protestant tricksters had to serve" (Dr. Taylor's *Diegesis*, p. 117).

17. "We have on record the most indubitably historical evidence of a general censure and correction of the gospels having been made at Constantinople in the year 506, by order of the emperor Anastasius" (*Diegesis*, p. 118).

18. "We have like unquestionable historical evidence of measureless and inappreciable alterations of the same having been made by our own Lanfranc, archbishop of Canterbury, for the avowed purpose of *accommodating them to the faith of the orthodox*" (*Ibid*).

19. "There are other passages retained and circulated as part of the Word of God which are known and admitted by all parties to be wilful interpolations and downright forgery and falsehood" (*Ibid*).

20. "We see with our own eyes and witness with our own experience—as, per example, in the Athanasian Creed—that nothing could be so absurd, so false, so wicked, but that it would be retained and supported by our Christian clergy, on the self-same principle as that on which they support all the rest on't, even because it supports them" (*Ibid*).

"Yet, after all, we shall find thousands of interested and aspiring pedants pretending to reconcile what cannot be reconciled, to prove what cannot be proved, and to show that to be true which every sense and faculty of man attests and demonstrates to be false. It is, however, on the ground of inspiration that they ultimately rest their pretensions; it is on that ground that the Tower of Babel was built; *that we leave them*; but on the ground of history, criticism, reason, and natural evidence they have no rest for the sole of their foot. I recommend them to treat us with contempt, and to send us to Coventry, and not to Oakham" (*Diegesis*, p. 118).

ERRORS OF THE GOSPELS.

It will only be necessary to cull from Dr. Taylor a portion of the positive errors of geography and date, as found in the canonical gospels, to show that their source was most imperfect and of a wholly unreliable character :

1. "He came unto the sea of Galilee through the midst of the coasts of Decapolis" (Mark vii. 31); when there were no coasts of Decapolis, and besides, the name was not so much as known prior to the reign of the Emperor Nero.

2. "He departed from Galilee and came into the coasts of Judea beyond Jordan" (Matt. xix. 1). It is well known that the Jordan was itself the eastern boundary of Judea, and that there were no coasts of Judea on the east side of it.

3. "But when he heard that Archelaus did reign in Judea, in the room of his father Herod, he was afraid to go thither; notwithstanding, being warned of God in a dream, he turned aside into the parts of Galilee. And he came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, He shall be called a Nazarene" (Matt. ii, 22, 23). In the first place, the son of Herod reigned in Galilee as well as in Judea, and Joseph and family were consequently no more beyond the power of the son of Herod there than in Judea proper. In the second place, it was impossible to have gone from Egypt to Nazareth without passing through the whole length of Archelaus' kingdom, except by making a roundabout journey east of the Lake Asphaltites and the country of Moab, and then either crossing the Jordan into Samaria or the Lake of Gennesareth into Galilee, and on to the city of Nazareth. This would be much like saying turning aside from Albany county, N. Y., into the parts of Berkshire, Mass. In the third place, there were no prophets who had prophesied that Jesus should be called a Nazarene, as was shown in Volume I. in the examination of prophecies. In the fourth place, there is no proof that Jesus was called a Nazarene, and his stopping there for a short season when a child would not justify such a title. In the fifth place, the term was not derived from being a sojourner in Nazareth, but from a religious sect of Egyptian

monks, called Essenes, or Therapēuta. Lastly, had the usual Jewish custom been followed, in place of Jesus of Nazareth, it would have been Jesus of Bethlehem, provided it is true that he was born in Bethlehem.

4. After Jesus and the devil had completed their forty days' familiarity in the wilderness, "he departed into Galilee, and leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is on the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias, the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles," etc. (Matt. iv, 12-15.) To Esaias, or any inhabitant of Judea, the country *beyond* must be the country *east* of the Jordan, whereas Capernaum was a city on the *western* side of the Lake of Gennesareth, through which the Jordan flows. Besides, as Paine fully shows, no such prophecy was made at all.

5. "He departed into Galilee, and, leaving Nazareth, came and dwelt at Capernaum" (Matt. iv. 13). As Capernaum is as much in Galilee as is Nazareth, the reason for making the change was wholly inadequate and absurd. It would be like saying he left the state of New York and went and dwelt in the city of Utica.

GOSPEL DATES HAVE ABOUT THE SAME AMOUNT OF RELIABILITY.—1. "And it came to pass in those days that there went out a decree from Cæsar Augustus that all the world should be taxed, and this taxing was first made when Cyrenius was governor of Syria" (Luke ii, 1, 2). It, however, unfortunately happens that there is no mention made by any Roman or Greek writer of any such edict having been sent abroad that all the people of the world should be taxed (the government had not the power to levy a tax on the whole world), nor even over the Roman provinces, in the time of Augustus, nor of any decree from that emperor for that purpose. That would have been an event of such importance and magnitude that it would not have been omitted, and precludes the possibility of no notice being taken of it by the historians of the time. Secondly, "in these days," i. e., when "Jesus was born,

in the days of Herod the king," Judea was not a Roman province, and it is wholly impossible that such a taxing by Roman authority could have taken place there. In the next place, Cyrenius was not governor of Syria till ten or twelve years after the time that Herod reigned over Judea, the time when Jesus is claimed to have been born. Again, the entire passage is taken from one of the apocryphal gospels, which were in use long before the gospel of St. Luke was written, and as Taylor says, "some of which, by leaving *the times and seasons* entirely in the hands of God, represented that this taxing was first made when King Solomon was reigning in all his glory, so that Pontius Pilate and he were contemporary, which did well enough before the wicked and skeptical art of criticism began to undermine the pillars of faith."

2. "There were present at that season some that told him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices" (Luke xiii, 11). It should be well understood by every reader that no historian, Jewish, Greek, or Roman, has made the least allusion to this bloody work, which is wholly improbable they could fail to do had anything of the kind ever taken place. No confidence should be placed in the slander until corroborated by some other proof. "Such an act was entirely out of character, for Pilate was a pagan and sacrificer himself, and would never have considered idolatry as a crime in anybody. We have the solution of the difficulty at once, by admitting the probability that as the name of King Herod was substituted in the later or more *orderly* and methodical transcripts of the Diegesis for that of King Solomon, so the act of good King Josiah (2 Kings, xxiii) has here been fathered upon Pontius Pilate."

FALSEHOODS OF GOSPEL STATISTICS.—1. "Annas and Caiaphas being the high-priests" (Luke iii, 2). There never were two high-priests at a time among the Jews, any more than there are two kings at a time in England, or two presidents in the United States at one time.

2. "Caiaphas, which was the high-priest that same year" (John xi, 50). Being "high-priest that year he prophesied," reads as though the term of the office was a year, while it is

well known by those acquainted with Jewish history that the office of high-priest was not annual, but for life; and that prophesying was no privilege or part of that office.

3. "Search and look, for out of Galilee ariseth no prophet" (John vii, 52). When it is remembered that the distinguished prophets Nahum and Jonah were Galileans, the incorrectness of the quotation will be readily perceived.

FALSEHOOD OF GOSPEL PHRASEOLOGY.—1. "They brought the ass and the colt, and put on them their clothes, and set him thereon" (Matt. xxi, 7). It would seem he sat astride of both—a difficult two-ass act, indeed. Taylor says, "This translator of Matthew's supposed original Hebrew copy of the *Diegesis*, being so grossly ignorant of the common pleonasm of the Hebrew language as to mistake its ordinary emphatic way of indicating a *particular* object by a *repetition* of the word, as *an ass*, '*even that which was the son*,' or foal, or had been born of an ass, for two of the species."

2. "And he said unto them, Go wash in the pool of Siloam, which is by interpretation, Sent" (John ix, 7). This happens to be an interpretation which no Jewish writer could give. "Siloam," Taylor says, "signifying not *sent*, but the place of the *sending forth* of waters, that is, the *sluice*; to say nothing of the absurdity of representing the pool as sent to the man, instead of the man being sent to the pool; or of the absurdity of supposing that one who was blind could see his way thither. Sure, here seems to have been a greater chance of the poor man's getting his baptism than his conversion. This text has so puzzled the commentators that they have endeavored to get the words '*which is by interpretation, sent*,' considered as a mere marginal note; but the authority of the codices attests them to be a part of the text itself. Whatever, then, be the credit due to the three first evangelists, the fourth may well be considered as neither better nor worse, and must stand or fall with them."

RECAPITULATION.—Such errors as have been pointed out, with almost innumerable others in all of the four gospels, can be accounted for on no other ground than that they are human

productions, and of an inferior grade at that. Dr. Taylor says: "We may challenge the whole world's history to furnish, from a period of such remote antiquity, a coincidence of circumstantial evidence to prove any fact whatever, so strong, so concatenated, and so entirely responsive to all the claims of the phenomena, as the evidence here adduced that the first types of the gospel story sprang from the Egyptian monks, and constituted the substance of the mystical romance which they had modified from the pagan mythology in conformity with their professed and acknowledged eclectic philosophy, and imposed for antecedent ages on the ecclesiastical colonies, which had migrated from the mother church of Alexandria.

"Thus, after Europe and all Christian communities have been for so many ages led to believe that in the four gospels they possessed the best translations that could be derived, in their several languages, from the original inspired text of immediate disciples and contemporaries of Christ, it is at length admitted that mankind have been and are egregiously deceived. 1. It is admitted that these gospels were *not* written by the persons to whom they are ascribed. 2. That Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John were only translators or copyists of previously existing documents. 3. Composed by we know not *whom*. 4. We know not *how*. 5. We know not *where*. 6. We know not *when*. 7. And containing we know not *what*. The very first assertion in the title-page of our New Testament, stating that it is translated from the original Greek, involves a fallacy, since it is absolutely certain that the Greek from which our translations are made was well nigh as far from being original as the translations themselves, and it is absolutely uncertain what the original was.

"Irenæus indeed, the disciple of Polycarp, which Polycarp is said to have conversed with St. John, and who himself lived and wrote in the middle of the second century, is the first of all the Fathers who mentions the four evangelists by name. But if this testimony were as certainly unexceptionable as it certainly is *not*, the being able to trace these scriptures so high or even higher than the second century would be no relief to the difficulties of the evidence, since the same

testimony attests the antecedent prevalence of the heresies of the Marcionites, Ebionites, and Valentinians, which were to be refuted out of these gospels, and which, as they were undoubtedly heresies from Christian doctrine, carry us as much too far beyond the mark as it might have been feared that we should fall short of it, and go to prove that *as* those heresies *so* these gospels which refuted them existed before the time ascribed to the birth of Christ. All the indications of date contained in those gospels themselves are manifestly erroneous. It is universally known and admitted that we have no history, nor Christian writing whatever besides, that so much as purports to come within the limits of the first century. At any rate, the predicament of being too soon on the stage is as fatal to the congruities of the story as being too late.

“ ‘The history of the New Testament,’ says Dr. Lardner, ‘is attended with many difficulties’ (Vol. I, p. 136).

“What could he mean by *difficulties* but *appearances of not being true*? What could he mean by *many* difficulties but that such appearances are not one, two, or a dozen, but meet us in every page? And what means the labor of his cumbersome volumes, but so much labor of so great a man, laid out on the sophistical business of making what he virtually admits appears to be falsehood, appear to be truth.

“All these geographical, chronological, political, and philological perplexities are such as never could have crossed the path of straightforward narrative, but are such exactly as would occur to eclectic plagiarists, engaged in the business of setting forth in order a tale of the then olden time; fitting new names and new scenery to the characters and catastrophes of an antiquated plot, and endeavoring to put an appearance of history and reality upon the creations of fictions and romance.

“That this Eclectic philosophy of the Alexandrine monks is the true parent of their Diegesis, of which the gospels that have come down to us are the legitimate issue, is the demonstration that will meet us now at every stage of that comparison of the pagan and Christian theology which our investigation challenges from us.”

CHRISTIANITY MERELY REVAMPED PAGANISM.

Probably in this connection nothing better can be laid before the reader than the following appropriate remarks from Dr. Taylor in the "Diegesis," p. 139 :

No conviction of our reason could be conceived to be more absolute and conclusive than that which assures us of the utter impossibility of there being any common features of resemblance between divine truth and human imposture. We are not conscious of our own existence with a greater degree of certainty than that by which we know that a religion which hath "God for its author, happiness for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter," could have no likeness to the foolish and impotent devices of weak and wicked men. The existence of such a likeness or resemblance between any two religions whatever, however superior the one might be to the other, would itself constitute the surest possible demonstration that both of them were false. In a religion, then, which purports to be from God, we have a right to expect internal evidences of its divinity, and a character as infinitely superior to any devices of men as infinite wisdom must be superior to human ignorance.

Having, then, obtained the consent of all parties that the Christian Savior, if any such person ever lived at all, must have lived and conversed with men in the era of Augustus, that is, eighteen hundred years ago, and that all the facts and doctrines of his religion are contained in the book called the New Testament, this great and important question becomes capable of being put to the test—from which nothing that is honest would shrink, from which nothing that is true can have anything to fear. Nothing which can be shown to have been in existence before the alleged time of the birth of Christ, nothing which came into existence long after "his glorious resurrection and ascension," can have any claim to be taken for Christianity. If before the date assigned to Christianity, and in regions and countries where a religion under that name was not known, we shall find all the ideas which that religion involves pre-existent, and already familiar to the apprehensions of men, there is no alternative but

that the conclusion must be endured. To attempt to resist that conclusion is to resist truth itself; to be afraid to do justice to the arguments that may lead to that conclusion is to surrender it without resistance.

THE PAGANS

1. Apologised for all the apparent absurdities of their system by pleading that nothing in it was to be understood according to the gross and revolting sense of the letter, but that the whole was to be explained conformably to a mystical allegorical meaning which conveyed the most sublime truths.

2. "For those who preside over the holy scriptures, philosophise over them, and expound their literal sense by allegory" (Eusebius concerning the Therapeutan priests).

CICERO.

Concerning the Pagan Augurs.

3. "No order of true religion passes over the law concerning the description of priests.

4. "For some have been instituted for the business of pacifying the gods.

5. "To preside at sacred ceremonies.

6. "Others to interpret the predictions of the prophet.

7. "Not of the many, lest the number should be infinite.

8. "But that none beside the college should understand those predictions which had been publicly recognized.

CICERO.

9. "For augury, or the power of foretelling future events, is the greatest and most excellent thing in the republic, and naturally allied to authority.

THE CHRISTIANS

1. Use precisely the same argument in defense of their system, only denying the benefit of it to their Pagan adversaries.

2. God also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit (2 Corinth. iii, 6). Which things are an allegory (Gal. iii, 24). (St. Paul concerning the Christian priests.)

THE NEW TESTAMENT.

Concerning the Christian Bishops.

3. And God hath set some in the church — first, apostles; secondarily, prophets; thirdly, teachers (1 Corinth. xii, 28).

4. O Lord, spare thy people, and be not angry with us forever (Liturgy).

5. Let the prophets speak two or three, and let the other judge (1 Cor. xiv, 29).

6. And let one interpret (1 Corinth. xiv, 27).

7. Let it be by two, or at the most by three, and that by course (1 Corinth. xiv, 27.)

8. Because it is given unto you [the College of Apostles] to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given (Matt. xiii, 11).

NEW TESTAMENT.

9. For greater is he that prophesieth than he that speaketh with tongues. Desire spiritual gifts, but rather that ye may prophecy. He that prophesieth

10. "Nor do I thus think, because I am an augur myself, but because it is absolutely necessary for us to think so.

11. "For if the question be of legal right, what is greater than the power to put away from the highest governments their right of holding counsels and issuing decrees; or to abolish them when holden? What more awful than for anything undertaken to be done away, if but one augur hath said otherwise.

12. "What more magnificent than to be able to decree that the supreme governors should resign their magistracy? What more religious than to give or not to give the right of treating or transacting business with the people? What than to annul a law if it hath not been duly passed—and for nothing that hath been done by the government—either at home or abroad, to be approved by any one, without their authority?" (*De Legibus*, lib. ii, 12.)

PHILO.

13. "In addition to these circumstances Philo describes the order of preferment among those who aspire to ecclesiastical ministrations, and the offices of the deacons, and the preëminency above all of the bishop."

speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortion, and comfort (1 Corinth. xiv, 1, 3, 5).

10. Neither have I written these things that it should be so done unto me (1 Corinth. ix, 15). Inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office (Rom. xi, 13).

11. Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unjust, and not before the saints? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? How much more things that pertain to this life? (1 Corinth. vi, 3).

If he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican (Matt. xviii, 17).

12. Verily, I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven (Matt. xvii, 18).

NEW TESTAMENT.

13. To all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi with the bishops and deacons (1 Philip i).

For they that have used the office of a deacon well, purchase to themselves a good degree.

If a man desire the office of a bishop he desireth a good work (1 Timothy iii, 13).

ROYAL PRIESTS.—Among the ancient Greeks the dignity of the priesthood was esteemed so great in most of their cities, and especially at Athens, as to be joined with that of the civil magistrate. Thus *Anius*, in Virgil, was king of Delos and priest of Apollo. In Egypt the kings were all

priests, and if any one who was not of the royal family usurped the kingdom, he was obliged to be consecrated to the priesthood before he could ascend the throne. At Sparta the kings, immediately upon their promotion, took upon them the two priesthoods of the heavenly and the Lacedemonian Jupiter; and all the sacrifices for the safety of the commonwealth were offered by them only.

SUBORDINATE CLERGY.—Besides these royal priests there were others taken from the body of the people, and consecrated to the service of religion. These were all accounted the ministers of the gods, and by them commissioned to dispense their favor to mankind. Whoever was admitted to this holy office was obliged to be of the most exemplary and virtuous character. They were required to be upright in mind and pure in heart and life, as well as perfect in body; they were to live chastely and temperately, abstaining from those pleasures which were considered innocent in other men. After their admission into holy orders, though marriage was not altogether forbidden, they were obliged and expected to preserve the most rigid chastity. They endeavored to weaken or overcome "all the sinful lusts of the flesh" by drinking the juice of hemlock, and by strewing the herb *agnus castus*, or *chaste lamb*, under their bed-clothes, which was believed to possess refrigerating qualities.

THE PRIESTS OF CYBELE, who held the dignity of *Theotokos*, *Deipara*, or Mother of God, which has since been transferred to the Virgin Mary, so conscientiously cut themselves off from the faculty of sinful sensations as to deserve the commendation of Christ himself (Matt. xix, 12), and to be imitated in so unequivocal a proof of sincere devotion by the most learned and distinguished Christian bishops Origen, Melito, etc.

PARASITES, OR DOMESTIC CHAPLAINS.—Another holy order of priests was that of the *Parasiti*, or Parasites, whose office was to gather from the husbandmen the corn that was to be set aside for the services of the ministry. It was at last an office of great honor, the Parasites being by the ancient laws reckoned among the chief magistrates. In every village of

the Athenians they maintained these priests at the public expense; but afterward, to ease the commonwealth of this burden, the wealthier sort were obliged to entertain them at their own tables, whence the word parasite, in later times, has been put for a flatterer, who, for the sake of a dinner, conforms to everyone's humor. This holy order of Parasites is continued in our Christian church in precisely the same character and function, under the less invidious name of domestic chaplains, who, hanging about the establishment of princes and nobles, generally contrive to worm themselves into the most lucrative ecclesiastical benefices upon the well-known economy,

The leech will not drop from your skin till it is full of blood.—*Horace.*

CONVERSION FROM PAGANISM TO CHRISTIANITY BROUGHT ABOUT ENTIRELY BY A TRANSFER OF PROPERTY.—Notwithstanding the conversion of Constantine to the Christian faith, the title, the ensigns, and the prerogatives of sovereign pontiff were accepted, without hesitation, by seven successive Christian emperors. Gratian was the first who refused the pontifical robe, and threw off the badges of paganism, for though he retained the title of Sovereign Pontiff, he performed no part of its functions. From motives no doubt of the most disinterested piety, "this emperor seized the lands and endowments which had been allotted to maintain the priests and sacrifices of the ancient paganism, and appropriated them to his own use." (A. D. 382.)

We have yet extant, and happily I have here on my table, the celebrated oration delivered by Julius Firmicius Maternus to the Emperors Constantius and Constans, the sons and successors of Constantine the Great, calling on those holy emperors to seize all the remaining property of the professors of paganism which his fathers had spared, and thus, by reducing them to beggary, to starve them into salvation.

"Take away, take away, in perfect security," exclaims this disinterested Christian orator, "O most holy emperors, take away all the ornaments of their temples. Let the fire of the mint, or the flames of the mines, melt down their gods. Seize upon all their wealthy endowments, and turn them to

your own use and property. And, O most sacred emperors, it is absolutely necessary for you to revenge and punish this evil. You are commanded by the law of the most high God to persecute all sorts of idolatry with the utmost severity. Hear and commend to your own sacred understandings what God himself commands. He commands you not to spare your son or your brother. He bids you plunge the avenging knife even into the heart of your wife that sleeps in your bosom; to persecute your dearest friend with a sublime severity, and to arm your whole people against these sacrilegious pagans, and tear them limb from limb. Yea! even whole cities, if you should find this guilt in them, must be cut off. O most holy emperors! God promises you the rewards of his mercy upon conditions of your thus acting. Do therefore what he commands—complete what he prescribes.”

Nothing can be more orthodox and truly Christian than this oration. It presents us a faithful picture of the genius and character of primitive Christianity. The reader will perhaps think he has enough of it. The Orator of the Areopagus, however he might have transgressed the laws of his country, transgressed not the fair sense of historic fact and license of oratorical figuration, when he said, “Astonished paganism grew pale when she saw the blood-stained banner of the cross, and from her innocent hand the flowery chaplets of the chaste Diana, and of the hospitable Jupiter, down dropt, and bloody treason triumphed over them!”

We have of the same age a beautiful contrast to this spiritual oration of Firmicius in an epistle of the pagan orator Libanius, in which he discovers at the same time what the tempers and dispositions of a pagan were toward those who left the faith of their ancestors and embraced the new-fangled doctrines of Christianity. “Orion,” writes he, “was my friend when he was in prosperity, and now he is in affliction, I have the same disposition toward him. If he thinks differently from us concerning the Deity, he hurts himself, being deceived; but it is not fit that his friends should therefore look upon him as an enemy.” Alas! since one who had once been a minister of the gospel, but is now prisoner for his conscientious opposition to it, fell into affliction and differ-

ence of opinion concerning the Deity, it was not only forgotten that he had once been a friend, but that he had ever been a fellow-creature, a brother, or a son.

We have also still extant the petition of Symmachus, the high-priest of paganism, which he presented to the Emperors Valentinian, Theodosius, and Arcadius, and for having delivered which the Emperor Theodosius commanded the reverend orator to descend from the pulpit and go immediately into exile. (Oakham.)

But impious and unreasonable as it was held to be in Christian ears, it was not worse than of a piece with the extract, which I here subjoin :

“ Does not the religion of the Romans come under the protection of the Roman laws ? By what name shall we call an alienation of rights which no laws or circumstances of things ever justified ? Freedmen receive legacies, nor are even slaves deprived of the privilege of receiving what is left to them by will ; they are only the noble vestals, and the attendants on the sacred rites upon which the public welfare depends, who are deprived of the privilege of receiving estates legally bequeathed to them. The Treasury detains the lands which were given to the vestals and their officers by our dying progenitors. Do but consult your own generous minds, and you will not think that those things belong to the public which you have already appropriated to the use of others. If length of time be of weight in matters of religion, surely we ought to preserve that faith which has subsisted for so many ages, and to follow our parents, who have so happily followed theirs. We ask for no other state of religion than that which secured the empire to your blessed father, and gave him the happiness of a legitimate issue to succeed him. That blessed prince now looks down from heaven and beholds the tears of the priests, and considers the breach of their privileges as a reflection upon himself.”

The holy Father and Bishop St. Ambrose strenuously opposed this petition, and ingeniously argued from a text of scripture, which served to carry the point in his days, but which since has become apocryphal, and consequently is no

longer to be found ; but this it was, "All the earth belongeth unto the righteous, but to the Infidels not one penny" (obelus).

Lardner is anxious to vindicate the disinterestedness of St. Ambrose, who opposed himself to this unreasonable remonstrance of "these poor, blind, benighted pagans;" and puts in proof the letter written to the Emperor Eugenius in the year 392, in which St. Ambrose declares that "those revenues had not been taken away by his advice; only he had advised that when once they were taken away, they should not be given back again." That's Christian all over! as much as to say, "I'll have nothing to do with thieving, but I'll go you halves!"

The reader has only to turn his eye to any table of the ecclesiastical revenues at this day, and he may solve as he shall please the important question whether if these revenues were taken away from the church, and transferred to the professors of as false a religion as ever was on earth, our churchmen would not run after the revenues, and leave Christianity to the fate of paganism. It is a remarkable fact that in the corpus juris, or whole body of Roman law, notwithstanding all the dreadful stories of persecutions and martyrdom which Christians relate that they have endured from the pagan magistrates, there never was on record any law whatever that had been enacted against Christians—while there were and have been the most sanguinary laws enacted for the prosecution and eternal persecution of unbelievers.

By a law of the Emperors Valentinus and Theodosius, whoever had been known to have apostatised from the Christian religion was debarred from the right of bequeathing property by will; nor was the pagan religion effectually suppressed till the profession of it was prohibited under the penalty of death. Thousands suffered that penalty whom we are not allowed to consider as martyrs. It is well known that the most holy and truly Christian Emperor Theodosius, put in practice the advice of Julius Firmicius, upon the herodox citizens of Thessalonica, to the letter. He put the whole city to the sword, and "utterly destroyed everything that breathed, even as the Lord God of Israel commanded"—an example which was followed in like manner on the ever

memorable day of St. Bartholomew, August 24, 1572, when seventy thousand Protestants, subjects of the most Christian Charles IX., were butchered throughout France at the instigation of the pious mother, Catherine de Medicis. Mr. Higgins, a sincere believer, thus concludes his beautiful work: "Look at Ireland, look at Spain, in short, look everywhere, and you will see the priests reeking with gore. They have converted, and are converting, populous and happy nations into deserts, and have made our beautiful world into a slaughter-house, drenched with blood and tears" (Celtic Druids, p. 299).

CHRISTIANITY A BORROWED SYSTEM.

To convince the candid examiner that the Christian religion is made up from religious systems which existed many centuries prior to it; that it had not a divine origin; that it was not a dispensation from heaven, and that it was not only man-made and of human origin, but that in every essential particular it is a mere plagiarism—a reconstruction from the dogmas and superstitions of older heathen nations, no more nor less than a revised variety of paganism—it is only necessary to study the pages of history bearing upon the subject.

I. We will find upon examination that the fundamental belief in the ministration of the son of God and of a crucified savior offered up as a sacrifice for the sins of the world, was old in many nations at the dawn of the Christian era. The world, according to the showing of eminent writers, has had some two score of saviors, one-half of whom were said to have been crucified, and Jesus was the last of the number. It cannot be consistently claimed that he was the original son of God, the original savior, the original sacrifice and atonement which was offered up for the salvation of the world when so large a number of saviors and redeemers preceded him, some three hundred, some five hundred, and some twelve hundred years.

II. We find further that all the doctrines, dogmas, practices, ordinances, sacraments, ceremonies, and observances of the Christian church were taught, impressed, and enjoined by

various pagan teachers centuries before Christianity existed. This being the case, how can its devotees, with any degree of truth, or a semblance of consistency, claim theirs to be the only original Simon-pure religion ever vouchsafed from God to man? Can it be possible that their God, or his son, in devising a grand plan of salvation by which the world was to be saved from endless torments, found it necessary to make up a "patch-work" system, taking a little here, borrowing a little there, from old pagan errors and superstitions that had existed centuries before? Is it true that a God of infinite knowledge, power, and wisdom could not originate a system of his own, and not be compelled to take the silly inventions and absurdities of pre-existing, ignorant, and unprogressed men?

III. We find, too, that the teachings and inculcations of Jesus, which his followers deem so grand, so sublime, so transcendently beautiful and godlike, his moral maxims, which have been pronounced wholly unequalled in the world, as well as other moral maxims equally as good, were uttered and enjoined by other reformers and other demigods hundreds of years prior to his time.

These facts are easily proved, and they conclusively show that Christianity is not an original system, that it had not a divine origin, but that its features and doctrines were all devised by men and borrowed or stolen from the heathen. Its boasted claims of originality and heavenly parentage are completely overthrown and scattered to the winds.

It is not necessary here to adduce elaborate quotations in proof of these propositions. We will merely name the saviors the world has had at different times, give some of the rites, ceremonies, and creeds borrowed from pagans, and point out a few of the morals and sentiments attributed to Jesus, which were much earlier taught by others, leaving the subject for a fuller consideration, perhaps, further along.

I. The world's saviors, redeemers, and reformers have been numerous; they have been believed in in many different countries, and some run far back into antiquity. Here are the names of a portion of them, as collated by Kersey Graves in his "Sixteen Crucified Saviors:"

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Christna, of Hindostan. | 22. Cadmus, of Greece. |
| 2. Buddha, of India. | 23. Hil and Feta, of the Mandaites. |
| 3. Zoroaster, of Persia. | 24. Universal Monarch, of the Sibyla. |
| 4. Crite, of Chaldea. | 25. Ischy, of Formosa. |
| 5. Baal and Taut, of Phoenicia. | 26. Pythagoras, of Samos. |
| 6. Thammuz, of Syria. | 27. The Holy One, of Xaca. |
| 7. Fohi and Tien, of China. | 28. Divine Teacher, of Plato. |
| 8. Thulis, of Egypt. | 29. Adonis, of Greece. |
| 9. Indra, of Thibet and India. | 30. Alceste, of Euripides. |
| 10. Devatat, of Siam. | 31. Hercules, son of God of Alcmena. |
| 11. Adad, of Assyria. | 32. Horus, son of Isis. |
| 12. Prometheus, of Caucasus. | 33. Hesus and Bremrillah, of the
Druids. |
| 13. Esculapius, of Egypt and Greece. | 34. Odin and Balder, of Scandinavia. |
| 14. Wittoba, of Telingonese. | 35. Alcides, of Thebes. |
| 15. Xamolxis, of Thrace. | 36. Thor, of the Gauls and Teutons. |
| 16. Zoor, of the Bonzes. | 37. Salivahand, of Bermuda. |
| 17. Atys, of Phrygia. | 38. Gentant and Quexalcote, of Mexico. |
| 18. Bali, of Afghanistan. | 39. Ixion, of Rome. |
| 19. Iao, of Nepaul. | 40. Quirinus, of Rome, |
| 20. Mikado, of the Sintoos. | |
| 21. Beddru, of Japan. | |

This list of saviors can be considerably extended and not exhaust the entire number, but probably here are enough for all practical purposes, to redeem one world from the curse of angry gods, and if this number cannot save it, perhaps it will have to be lost.

Several of these saviors were said to have been begotten of God and born of virgins. Half the number were crucified for the salvation of the world, dying in great agony; and all were said to have received marked favor from heaven, and were considered special mediators and atoning sacrifices for the sins of man, prior to the reputed life and death of Jesus. Appended are the names of these saviors and the dates of their crucifixion, according to Graves:

I. Christna, of Hindostan.....	1200 years B. C.		
II. Buddha, of India.....	600	"	"
III. Thammuz, of Syria.....	800	"	"
IV. Wittoba, of the Telingonese.....	550	"	"
V. Iao, of Nepaul.....	620	"	"
VI. Hesus, of the Celtic Druids.....	834	"	"
VII. Quexalcote, of Mexico.....	327	"	"
VIII. Quirinus, of Rome.....	406	"	"
IX. Prometheus, of Greece.....	547	"	"

X. Thulis, of Egypt.....	1700	"	"
XI. Indra, of Thibet.....	725	"	"
XII. Alcestos, of Greece.....	600	"	"
XIII. Atys, of Phrygia.....	600	"	"
XIV. Crite, of Chaldea.....	1200	"	"
XV. Bali, of Orrisa.....	725	"	"
XVI. Mithra, of Persia.....	1200	"	"

In addition to these, Devatat of Siam, Ixion of Rome, Apollonius of Tyana in Cappadocia, are all reported in history as having died the death of the cross.

Thus we see that in many nations, long before the Christian era, the belief in a crucified savior had an existence. Then is it not easy to see whence the idea was derived?

II. That the traditions, rites, ceremonies, and dogmas of Christianity were copied or purloined from older religious systems is easily seen:

1. The birth of many of the saviors of the ancients were claimed to have been pointed out by the stars.

2. Several of them were said to have been born in a stable and in a manger.

3. The birth of a number of them was announced by angels to shepherds.

4. Wise men or magi were claimed to have visited them in their early infancy, and to have worshiped and made them presents.

5. The 25th of December was the birthday designated for several of them, and has been a special day for feasts and ceremonies in commemoration and in honor of the sons of gods for thousands of years.

6. The titles of the heathen saviors were much like those claimed for the Judean savior. The Most High, the Lord of Life, Holy Living God, Son of God, Mediator, Savior, Redeemer, Redeemer of the World, the Lamb of God, the Ram of God, the Holy Lamb, the True Light, the Sun of Righteousness, True Light of the World, Light of Men, Guide to the Erring, Advocate with the Father, are some among the great number of titles given to the pagan saviors.

7. The legend of the savior being saved from destruction

when all the other infants were killed—as in the time of Herod—was handed down from centuries before that date.

8. The retirement and forty days' fasting of the savior is an ancient heathen legend.

9. The performance of miracles was attributed to nearly all the saviors, and greatly dwelt upon. Several raised the dead.

10. The older saviors had disciples, whom they led about over the country, whom they taught, and whose feet they washed.

11. They taught multitudes in the villages, on the highway, in the fields, and in the wilderness.

12. At the crucifixion of some of them the sun was said to have been darkened and earthquakes to have taken place.

13. Several of the demigods were said to have descended into hell after their crucifixion.

14. The claim that they arose from the dead, from the grave, and from the sepulcher, was accorded to a number of them.

15. The miraculous ascension into heaven was claimed for a part, at least, of the oriental saviors.

16. The doctrine of the Trinity is a thousand years older than Christianity.

18. The Holy Ghost idea came from India.

17. The belief in a devil originated in heathen lands.

19. The cross, as a religious symbol, was used hundreds of years before Christ in India, Thibet, Egypt, and other countries.

20. Immortality of the soul was first taught by pagans.

21. The personalized idea of the "word," or "logos," the creator, as used by St. John, was of oriental origin.

22. Baptism by water was early practiced in India and Persia.

23. The Holy Ghost descending in the form of a dove is an ancient Eastern legend.

24. The sacrament of the Eucharist came from the pagans.

25. Anointing with oil was practiced from time immemorial.

26. The worship of demigods, as we have seen, was of heathen origin.

27. Belief in saints and the reverence of them dates back many centuries before Christianity.

28. The doctrine of future rewards and punishments was first taught by pagans.

29. A great and final day of judgment originated in heathen countries.

30. The belief in the resurrection of the dead is much older than Christianity.

31. The belief in angels and spirits was held by many pagan nations thousands of years ago.

32. Fasting and prayer were of Eastern origin.

33. The power to forgive sin was taught by the heathens.

34. A belief that Bibles or sacred writings were the word of God existed in many pagan countries, and they have several Bibles older than the Jewish book.

35. The "second birth" was first taught in heathendom.

36. Confession and absolution of sin were of pagan origin.

37. Monasteries and monks existed hundreds of years in central Asia before the era of Christianity.

38. The order of the Priesthood long existed in all pagan countries.

39. Repentance and humility were enjoined by the ancients—by Zoroaster, Buddha, and many others.

40. The efficacy of prayer, directed to the gods, was early taught in all heathen lands.

In view of the fact that the entire system of Christianity was copied, borrowed, and appropriated from pre-existent systems, we are led to wonder at the dearth and sterility of the minds of its founders in the line of originality and invention. It would seem that an ordinary intelligence could have been able to get up a few new ideas, at least. If we take from Christianity all that was borrowed from heathen lands, there is literally nothing left of it save its cruel persecutions and horrible bloodshed, which it seems its founders did not borrow from heathen nations, and here their originality and invention became active. We shall examine this feature of Christianity more fully in subsequent pages.

III. We have room for a small number only of the moral maxims of the pagan saviors, demigods, and sages, but proba-

bly sufficient to show that they contain the gist of the over-lauded maxims attributed to Jesus, and that they were the originals from which the later productions were copied :

1. MENU, nearly a thousand years before Christ, said : " Let no man be offended with those who are angry with him, but reply gently to those who curse him." " Endure injuries and despise no one." " Commit no hostile act for your own preservation." Fuller quotations from his precepts are given in the chapter on the religions of the Hindoos.

2. PYTHAGORAS taught 650 years B. C., " Do not to your neighbor what you would take ill from him."

3. CONFUCIUS taught 500 years B. C.: " Do unto another what you would have him do unto you, and do not to another what you would not have him do unto you. Thou needest this alone. It is the foundation of all the rest." " Desire not the death of thine enemy." " Hold faithfulness and sincerity as first principles." " When you have faults do not fear to abandon them." " To subdue one's self and return to propriety is perfect virtue."

4. CHRISTNA thus taught : " He is my beloved servant who is the same in friendship and hatred, in honor and dishonor, in cold and in heat, in pain and in pleasure ; who is unsolicitous about the event of things ; to whom praise and blame are as one ; who is of little speech, and is pleased with whatever comes to pass ; who owneth no particular home, and who is of a steady mind." " He who can bear up against the violence produced by lust and anger in this life is properly employed and a happy man." (See the article on Christna in Volume I.)

5. BUDDHA thus taught : " Let a man overcome anger with love ; let him overcome evil by good ; let him overcome the greedy by liberality ; the liar by the truth." " Not to commit any sin, to do good and purify one's mind, that is the teaching of the awakened." For fuller precepts of Buddha the reader will turn to the article on Buddha in Volume I. and Buddhism in this volume.

6. THALES, 464 years B. C., said : " Avoid doing what you would blame others for doing." " Cultivate friendship for an enemy." " Be kind to your friends, that they may continue

so, and to thine enemies, that they may become so." "Prevent injuries, if possible; if not, do not revenge them." "Be to everybody kind and friendly." "Speak evil of no one, not even thine enemies."

7. BIAS, one of the noted seven wise men of Greece, nearly six hundred years before Christ, taught thus: "It is a proof of a weak and disordered mind to desire impossibilities." "The greatest infelicity is not to be able to endure misfortunes patiently." "Great minds alone can support a sudden reverse of fortune." "The most pleasant state is to be always gaining." "Be not unmindful of the miseries of others." "If you are handsome, do handsome things; if deformed, supply the defects of nature by your virtues." "Be slow in undertaking, but resolute in executing." "Praise not a worthless man for the sake of his wealth." "Do all the good you can, and, whatever good you do, ascribe the glory of it to the gods." "Lay in wisdom as the store of your journey from youth to old age, for it is the most certain possession."

It is claimed that he wrote two thousand verses of similar moral maxims.

8. PYTHAGORAS thus taught: "Every man ought to speak and act with such integrity that no one would have reason to doubt his simple affirmation." "It is impossible he can be free who is a slave to his passions." "To revenge yourself on an enemy, make him your friend."

9. SOCRATES enjoined: "Return not an injury if you have received one." "Return not evil for evil."

10. PLATO, the Grecian, taught this: "The unrighteous man, or the sayer and doer of unholy things, had far better not yield to the illusion that his roguery is cleverness." "For men glory in their shame; they fancy they hear others say of them, 'These are not mere good-for-nothing persons, burdens on the earth, but such as men should be who mean to dwell safely in a state.'" "There are two patterns set before them in nature; the one blessed and divine, the other godless and wretched." "Honor is a divine good, and no evil thing is honorable." "The perfectly just man is he who loves justice for its own sake, not for the honors and advantages that

attend, and is willing to pass for unjust while he practices the most exact justice, and will not suffer himself to be moved by disgrace or distress, but will continue steadfast in the love of justice, not because it is pleasant, but because it is right."

11. SEXTUS, over 400 years B. C., inculcated thus: "What you wish your neighbors to be to you, such be ye also to them." "Endure all things if you would serve God."

12. ARISTOTLE, 380 years B. C., thus taught: "We should conduct ourselves toward others as we would have them act toward us."

13. ARISTIPPUS, 365 years B. C., prescribed thus: "Cherish that reciprocal benevolence which will make you as anxious for another's welfare as for your own."

14. ISOCRATES, 338 years B. C., said, "Act toward others as you would have them act toward you."

15. PUBLIUS SYRUS said: "Pardon the offenses of others, but never your own." "You can accomplish by kindness what you cannot by force." "Better overlook an injury than avenge it." "It is a kingly spirit to return good deeds for evil ones." "Receive an injury rather than do one."

16. The ESSENEs enjoined: "Lay up nothing on earth, but fix your mind solely on heaven." "Forsake father, mother, brothers and sisters, houses and lands."

17. HILLEL, 50 years B. C., inculcated, "Do not to others what you would not like others to do to you."

18. ANTONINUS said: "Be to everyone kind and friendly."

19. PHILO taught, "It is our first duty to seek the kingdom of heaven and its righteousness."

20. MARCUS AURELIUS, a Roman emperor of the second century, but who was a heathen, said: "Be cheerful and seek not external help, nor the tranquillity which others give."

"A man must stand erect and not be kept erect by others."

"Never value anything as profitable to thyself which shall compel thee to break thy promise, to lose thy self-respect, to curse, to act the hypocrite, to desire anything which needs walls and curtains." "If thou holdest to this, expecting nothing, fearing nothing, but satisfied with thy present activity according to nature, with heroic truth in every word and

sound which thou utterest, thou wilt live happy, and there is no man able to prevent this."

Similar maxims of morality and exalted sentiments from the sages and teachers who lived and died prior to the Christian era might easily be quoted to the extent of a large volume, but this is not our present purpose. We have, however, cited enough, together with what we have given our readers elsewhere, to show that morals as pure and unexceptionable as Jesus is said to have promulgated were uttered by numerous teachers. Conceding to Jesus all the praise that may be due him for many of his utterances, candor and truth compel the averment that his best sayings were not original with him, and if they were not absolutely borrowed they were certainly used by others long before him.

We see in the above extracts as much to commend and revere as in the teachings of the Nazarene, and less that is objectionable. As much as may be said by the admirers of Jesus in favor of his inculcations, he certainly taught some doctrines that would, if carried out, not tend to the benefit of the world. For instance, his charge "to take no thought for the morrow" would prevent enterprise, provision for the future, and throw man back into a state of idleness and objectless barbarism. His instructions to give a man a cloak if he steals a coat is simply a premium on crime. The turning of the left cheek to be smitten if the right is stricken would be craven, unmanly, and productive of no good. The scourging and beating of money-changers was not extremely lamb-like. Getting angry at a fig-tree and cursing it because it did not bear figs at the wrong season of the year did not indicate forbearance, discretion, or good judgment.

We cannot see that the teachings of Jesus possess any superiority over those of the sages who lived before him. They appear no more godlike, no more exalted, and no more inspired, than the maxims of his predecessors. As his ~~were~~ subsequent productions, they cannot be the original, and they sound much like plagiarisms and piracies.

From what is here shown, but one conclusion is possible, and that is that the system of Christianity is of a composite character and was made up of the dogmas, legends, and tra-

ditions of the older heathen systems which preceded it; and that it is only paganism in a revised form.

And it is this system of revised ancient dogmas and absurdities that costs this country \$200,000,000 annually, and the return it yields in education, in intellectual growth, in the knowledge of nature, in the laws of the universe, and in real good to the people, is meagre indeed. We hail, however, the light of science and truth, which will ultimately drive all pagan dogmas from the world.

The foregoing references and quotations are from Sir William Jones' "Asiatic Researches," Max Müller, Jacolliot, Taylor's "Diegesis," Higgins' "Anacalypsis," and last, but not least, Graves' "The World's Sixteen Crucified Saviors."

DID JESUS REALLY EXIST?

The extreme doubt whether such a person as Jesus had a real existence is strengthened more and more the fuller the matter is investigated. From the fact that he never wrote a line that has been handed down to posterity; that the world has no possible means of knowing anything about such a personage having lived save what is obtained from the unknown authors of what are called the gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and when there is no evidence that these books were written before the latter part of the second century, it can be readily understood that the life and character of the individual under consideration is extremely mythical, as there is no contemporaneous history showing that such a person lived.

Defenders of Christianity frequently quote the paragraph in Josephus corroborating the claim that such a person did live at one time in Judea. But Dr. Lardner, one of the most eminent Christian historians, long ago pronounced this an interpolation, a forgery, never existing in the original manuscript of Josephus. This opinion of Dr. Lardner was also entertained by Gibbon, Ittigius, Blondell, Le Clerc, Vandale, Bishop Warburton, Tanaquil Faber, and Baring-Gould, the most of whom are noted Christian authorities. In fact, the first Christian writers and authors of the past as well as

of the present day unite in pronouncing the paragraph alluded to a forgery. Eusebius, in the fourth century, was the first to call attention to the spurious passage, and he is generally accredited with having inserted the paragraph referring to Jesus. On several occasions Eusebius proved himself amply able to use interpolation, spurious additions, and forgeries. Mosheim, in his "Ecclesiastical History," page 70, in alluding to this characteristic of the early Christian Fathers, uses the language: "It was not only lawful but commendable to deceive and lie for the sake of truth and piety." It is lamentable that so little reliance can be placed upon the authenticity of the Christian writers in the early centuries of our era. The fact that they were crafty and designing men, and that they used their best abilities to build up the new system of religion which they had allied themselves to, requires little additional proof.

It is a well-known fact that in the first and second centuries there were three distinct classes of Christians: the Gnostics, who firmly held that such a person or individual as Christ never had an existence as a man in the flesh, and that he was a spirit only. The Arians were another class. They admitted that there was a man Jesus, but held that he was merely a human being, and not a God. The third class maintained that he not only existed in the flesh, but that he was also the eternal God of heaven and earth. The disputes and quarrels between these contending factions became very heated and bitter, until finally the third class, by strategy and superior numbers, overpowered those who denied that such a person as Christ had had a real existence, and forced them to abandon the field, and it afterward became a recognized dogma of the church that Jesus had not only been a man, but also was absolutely God. But that large numbers in the first two centuries did persistently and stoutly contend that such a person as Christ had not had a real existence in the body, cannot be effectually gainsaid, and is well calculated to excite our liveliest suspicions.

In taking into consideration the characteristics of men who have played an active part in different ages of the world in establishing the various systems of religion and creeds the

world has known, it is not difficult to appreciate how such a system as Christianity might have gained a foothold among men without the events strictly having transpired which are claimed. In our own day we have seen Mormonism arise from the merest pretenses and the barest assertions, and have seen it within a few decades grow into a system that now has very considerable strength, and has the implicit confidence of thousands.

Mohammedanism is another illustration of this religious growth. It originated in the claims, assertions, and assumptions of an individual, and gradually spread over several countries until hundreds of millions accepted it as a God-given religion, and they have not a shade of doubt but what it is the most divine bequest ever made to the world. Those of us who are not under the influence of this religion can easily see where its devotees are mistaken, and that they have been misled by designing or deluded leaders. If it is impossible for us to feel the same veneration for their creed and their superstitions that they do, we can complacently and dispassionately view the position they occupy with the disinterestedness of an outside observer, and can easily perceive the mistakes and fallacies they have made, as well as comprehend the untenability of the divine claims they set up.

So it is with Christianity. Those not incircled within the influence which it exerts, and who do not bow to the demands which it sets up, are able to see not only its defects, but the errors it makes in claiming a direct divine origin.

When we find that the authorities upon which a system rests are defective, and that they do not corroborate the claims put forth by its advocates, we have good grounds to doubt its truth. We remarked that the four gospels were unknown till near the close of the second century, or rather that there is no proof of their earlier existence. Irenæus was the first Christian writer who referred to them or recognized them as being extant, and he died in the fore part of the third century. Other pretended and spurious gospels, almost without number, had been known prior to this, but they were discarded as fraudulent, and those upon which the grand fabric of Christianity is founded were unknown till

nearly two hundred years after the time Jesus was said to have lived. What uncertain data to build upon ! What a fine opportunity was here afforded the early Fathers to get up the gospel story, or to have it written to order ! The gospels have been attributed to various Christian Fathers, as well as to bishops, priests, and monks, but with what amount of truth it is now impossible to demonstrate. It is also claimed that the plot of the gospel story was handed down from the Essenes, the Therapeuts, and the monks of Egypt, and was revised, rewritten, and relocated by Christians in the early centuries, similar to what Shakspeare did by the most of his plays, the plots of which were borrowed from the inventions and traditions of earlier times.

The Nicene Council, consisting of hundreds of quarrelsome and pugilistic bishops, called together by that wholesale Christian murderer Constantine, assembled in the year 325 principally to consider what was called the heresy of Arius, and incidentally the books which were to compose the Christian scriptures. Contentions and quarrels were numerous. They took into consideration also the authenticity of fifty or more "gospels" written by different individuals, and then indulged in the most acrimonious dissensions; but they did not at that time decide what should be regarded as the New Testament canon. The first general council, however, called specially to make the books to compose the canon, was that of Laodicea. It is said to have been held in Phrygia in the year 363. This council pronounced canonical the books now composing the New Testament, and in keeping with what Origen had previously decided should be accepted as genuine scriptures. This occurred nearly four centuries after the time Jesus was said to have been born, and long after it was claimed the books were written. Subsequent councils held in 397 and 406 reversed the decisions of the former councils with regard to the canonicity of several of the New Testament books. But it was not until the middle of the sixth century that the books now composing the New Testament were fully settled upon, several of them having been persistently discarded by previous authorities. Thus we see by what a frail tenure our

boasted "Word of God" hangs, and how easy it was for fraud and deception to have been practiced in getting it up.

As to the character of the church councils which met in the earlier centuries, it is only necessary to call attention to the opinion given of them by St. Gregory Nazianzen, who lived at the time some of them were held, in a letter to Procopius, as quoted by the Christian writer Tindal: "He said he fled all the assemblies of the bishops because he never saw a good and happy end of any council, but that the love of contention and ambition always overcomes their reason. Nothing is heard there but geese and cranes, who fight without understanding one another." Pappius, in his "Synodicum of the Council of Nice," speaks of that body and the manner in which they decided which books were inspired. This was done, he says, "by placing all the books under a communion table, and upon the prayers of the council, the inspired books jumped upon the table, while the false ones remained under."

The facts here mentioned, together with others before alluded to, the close resemblance between Jesus and the numerous demigods and teachers who preceded him, are quite sufficient to shake the confidence of the most credulous devotee in the actuality of his existence. Christna, Buddha, and others have been considered, but if it is not too much like repetition we will call attention to others who preceded Jesus, and to whose acts and sayings his bear a very strong resemblance.

ALCIDES, of Egypt, was said to have been born of a virgin, to have performed miraculous cures, to have converted water into wine, to have cast out devils, to have raised two persons from the dead, to have restored sight to the blind, to have made the dumb speak and the lame walk. For Osiris, also, similar claims were made.

Of PYTHAGORAS, of Greece, his devout followers asserted that he was originally a spirit from heaven; that his birth was miraculously foretold; that his mother, a virgin, conceived by a spectre; that in his youth he astonished the doctors by his learning and knowledge; that he could foretell events; that he could subdue wild beasts; that he could be in two places at once; that he could walk on water; that he could handle

poisonous serpents without injury ; that he cured all manner of diseases ; restored sight to the blind ; cast out devils ; allayed tempests ; raised people from the dead ; and thousands, almost, of other wonderful feats, as narrated by Jamblicus. He was said to possess a very humble disposition ; to be very kind to the poor ; to have fasted and prayed, and to have advised his disciples to forsake relatives and houses and lands for religion's sake. In precepts, moral lessons, and purity of life, there was a great similarity between him and Jesus, but the latter is not claimed to have existed till the former had been dead five hundred years.

PROMETHEUS was a mythical character, but five centuries before the time of Jesus it was held of him that he had a miraculous birth ; that he had a band of disciples ; that he taught the best moral precepts ; that he was finally crucified as an expiation for mankind amid signs, wonders, and miracles ; that nature was convulsed, and that deceased saints arose from their graves ; that the sun was darkened and refused to shine ; that after crucifixion he descended into hell, and was afterward seen to ascend into heaven.

APOLLONIUS of Tyana, in Cappadocia, had faithful disciples and biographers in Dumos and Philostratus, who made great claims for this remarkable personage, and which was implicitly believed by great numbers of people ; that he had a miraculous conception ; that his mother was a virgin ; that all nature was subject to his power ; that he performed great numbers of miraculous cures ; that he restored the blind to sight ; made the lame walk ; cast out devils ; raised the dead ; read the thoughts of those around him ; caused a tree to bloom ; spoke in languages he never learned ; that he was transfigured ; that he led a spotless life ; that he did not marry, and opposed sexual pleasures ; that he spent his time in teaching those who gathered around him ; that he was a prophet, and could foretell events ; that he was imprisoned and loaded with chains ; that he was crucified amidst a display of divine power ; that he rose from the dead ; that he appeared to his disciples after his resurrection ; that he finally ascended up to heaven to sit at the right hand of the Father,

and much more of a similar character, and fully equal in every respect to what was claimed for Jesus.

Of SIMON MAGUS, who also existed before Christ, it was claimed that he was "in the beginning with God," that he existed from all eternity; that he took upon himself the form of man; that he was the "word," the son of God; that he was the second person in the trinity; that he could control the elements; that he could walk in the air; that he could move any bodies at will; that he raised the dead; that he came to redeem the world from sin; that he was the world's savior, redeemer, and the only begotten of the Father, and that through his name the world was to be saved.

Numerous other saviors and redeemers, who lived before Christ, might be named in this connection to show the striking similarity which existed between him and them, but we have already quoted enough to give the reader clearly to understand that there were, hundreds of years before the time of Jesus, abundance of material of which to spin and weave his story; and that, taking all the facts into consideration, the prior existence of similar claims, and the extreme doubt of the authenticity of the gospel narratives of Christ, the strongest probability is that such a personage as Jesus never had an existence; or that, if he did exist, he was only a common mortal, to whom a century or two after his death was falsely attributed by designing, dishonest persons, deific characteristics, impossible performances, and moral utterances, after the style of the fabulous demigods and distinguished teachers of older times.

CHRISTNA, of India, is a marked prototype of Jesus. It is held by the people of that country that he lived three thousand years ago. If he was a myth, he was at least a myth much older than Jesus. The points of similarity between the myths of Christna and Christ are as striking as their names. Both were born of virgins; both were begotten by God; both were favored with divine power by which they were enabled to perform great miracles; both lived lives of self-denial and ascetic virtue; both had a band of disciples; both taught the best of morals and enjoined love to man; both raised people from the dead; both had wicked enemies;

both were arrested, subjected to painful indignities, and put to death; both were crucified, Christna being fastened upon a tree by the side of the river Ganges; both had great numbers of worshipers; both were claimed as mediators between God and man; both were revered and loved by women hundreds of years after they were no more seen on the earth.

BUDDHA was another prototype of the Judean redeemer. He was born of a virgin; his mother was impregnated by miraculous power; he lived a life of the strictest self-denial; he taught the purest doctrines the world ever knew; he enjoined peace, gentleness, and self-abnegation; he performed numerous miracles; he had many disciples; his teachings are regarded as sacred lessons. He was greatly loved by his people, and held in sacred remembrance long after his death and even to the present time. His system of religion has existed nearly three thousand years, and its devotees number four hundred millions people, twice the number that follow Jesus.

ZOROASTER was another model for Jesus to pattern after. He was ministered to by invisible divine beings; he taught what were considered divine laws, and was the founder of a great system of religion.

CONFUCIUS was another great teacher and lawgiver. His moral lessons were of the highest character. He lived five hundred years before the time of Jesus, and has had a far greater following than the latter.

ÆSCULAPIUS, the Egyptian and Grecian son of God—the great physician—had many points of character in common with Jesus. He performed most astonishing cures, and healed the lame and blind. He also raised the dead. By the mother's side Æsculapius was the son of Coronis, who had received the embraces of God. He was deified after his death by thousands of admiring worshipers.

ADONIS was another demigod to whom Jesus bore considerable resemblance. His mother was a woman and his father a god. He was greatly revered by his worshipers, and they called him Lord.

IS THE STORY CREDIBLE?

As to the real time of the birth of Jesus there is no agreement among those who claim to be authorities upon the subject, and the most bitter contests have existed in the matter among Christian writers. The bishop of Gloucester and Bristol inclined to the opinion that his birth occurred in the month of February. Weiesler, the German chronologer, and Tischendorf were of the same opinion, while Greswell, another German writer, decided that it occurred on the 5th or 6th of April. Dr. Robinson was of the opinion that it took place in autumn. Lardner says Jesus was born between the middle of August and the middle of November. The only correct conclusion that can be arrived at is that Jesus was not born on the 25th of December, and it is not the only curious circumstance in connection with him that a day is celebrated as his birthday on which he was not born, but was adopted by the early Christian church because for many centuries it had been a heathen festival.

As difficult as it was to decide the day and month of Jesus' birth, there was also as great uncertainty in reference to the year. There is a discrepancy of seven years among the different authorities, and it is impossible even now to decide whether we are living in the year 1880 or 1887.

In fact there is far from being corroborative proof that such a person ever had an existence. We have the narratives accredited to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John; but we have no way of knowing whether they wrote them or not. No profane historian corroborates the story of his existence.

How reliable are these four statements? We know nothing of their credibility, or whether they were written by one person, or four, or more. At best, they were written a long time after the death of Jesus—Christian authorities say from thirty to sixty years, but it was probably a much later period.

It is not very material to us whether those four narratives were written thirty years after the time Jesus died, or two hundred and thirty years after. It is impossible in either case to understand how the writers could know anything about some of the remarkable events they presumed to describe.

The claims also which are set up in two or three narratives are of such an extraordinary nature that it is difficult to understand how a sensible person can credit them. The begetting of the child Jesus by a ghost is alluded to—that his mother became pregnant without the offices of a person of the opposite sex. The statement is so at variance with all human experience that it is passing strange that it can be so easily believed by great numbers of people, and that the salvation of the world should depend upon the truth of what an unknown person says a carpenter dreamed nearly nineteen hundred years ago. If it were in this age stated by a reporter of average credibility, or by a score of them even, that a young damsel had become pregnant by a ghost and without intercourse with one of the “male persuasion,” would the story be generally credited? Are extravagant stories two or three thousand years old any more likely to be true than similar ones of modern times?

It is, of course, claimed that those stories were written by inspiration, and are therefore reliable; but who says so, and by what authority? The writers themselves claim nothing of the kind, and do not even hint that they were written by the dictation of God, or of angels. Are we bound to believe they wrote by inspiration when they did not claim it, and when nobody claimed it till hundreds of years afterward?

We have seen it was believed for many hundred years prior to Christ's time that Christna, Buddha, Alcides, Prometheus, Pythagoras, Apollonius, and many others were born of virgins. If we can believe that this was true in one case, simply because the assertion is made, are we not equally bound to believe it was so in other cases when a similar claim is set up? Is there any more proof that this was true of Jesus than of the others?

Admitting, however, that Jesus had an existence, was he in any remarkable degree such a “wonderful child” as many think he was? Did he, as a child or man, possess remarkable ability? The “gospels” say very little of him until he was thirty years of age, and from that time till his death did he accomplish anything more wonderful than has repeatedly been claimed for others? Did his strolling over the country, fol-

lowed by a band of fishermen and others, talking to the numbers who gathered around him, indicate greater ability than similar performances by many other individuals? Were the miracles, including the raising of the dead, any more extraordinary than have been claimed for other distinguished characters and demigods?

Giving him full credit for all his utterances, that his remarks were sage, that his morals were pure, and that his impulses were benevolent and humane, did he perform grander works, did he pronounce wiser maxims, did he utter purer morals, than any others of the ancient philosophers and sages who preceded him hundreds of years? Were his beatitudes, as they are termed, any deeper, any higher, any broader, or more sublime, than the previous teachings of Christna, Zoroaster, Buddha, Confucius, Pythagoras, Bias, Socrates, Plato, Epicurus, Zeno, Apollonius, and many others, to say nothing of Mohammed, Seneca, and Antoninus, who lived after him? Was not the Golden Rule, which is admitted on all hands to be the sublimest and greatest of all his utterances, distinctly taught by several of the characters above named, as well as by Isocrates, Pittacus, Sextus, Hillel, and others, and all before he ever uttered the sentiment? If, then, he really taught the beatitudes and maxims he is credited with, being the son of God, is he deserving of greater credit and praise than others, who before taught precepts and sentiments equally as good, and they being merely human beings? Are the dogmas of the Christian church in any respect superior to the dogmas of paganism? Was not the *symbol of the cross* used in India and Egypt a thousand years before Christians adopted it? Did not *monasteries and monks* exist in Thibet and central Asia a millennium before the Christian era? Was not *immortality of the soul* taught by pagans long before Christians taught it? Was not *baptism* an old heathen rite long before the existence of Jesus or John the Baptist? Was not the *Eucharist* an old ceremony long before there were any Christians? Did not a belief in *devils, angels, and saints* prevail in many heathen countries a thousand years before Jesus was born? Were not *fasting and praying* old pagan rites? Were not *confession, absolution, and forgiveness of sin* believed in and prac-

·ticed long before Christianity adopted them? Has not *prayer and worship* been practiced by all nations for thousands of years? Did not *bibles and sacred writings* have an existence long before the Jewish and Christian Bible? Did not the pagans, as we have seen, have their *incarnated deities* and demigods, who performed many miracles and raised people from the dead, many centuries before Jesus was born? Have not all systems of religion, older than Christianity, had their *priests and holy men* who have made known the will of the gods to the ignorant multitudes, and who received a liberal support, without manual labor, for performing this service?

It perhaps is not worth while to write a longer list of interrogatories, nor to repeat the damaging facts relative to the Christian system. Enough has already been said to show the candid examiner that there is nothing new or original in the story of Jesus, and that it is far more likely it is a copy of the old myths than that it is a divine emanation, almost an exact copy of antique paganism. The history among all religions is that one system has been copied from another, and Christianity forms no exception to the rule.

Let it be asked then, is there anything so lovely in the Christian system as to compel us to bow down in adoration before it? Is it a sublime and beautiful idea that God should bring into existence numberless millions of human beings, whose inevitable destiny is eternal torment and unhappiness? Is it a lovely conception that God found it necessary to leave his throne in heaven and come down and dwell a lifetime among men, to be put to an ignominious and cruel death, that a fraction of the human race might be saved from the tortures of hell, to which all mankind were helplessly doomed, because an ignorant man and woman, six thousand years ago, ate an apple? Is there, indeed, such a remarkable efficacy in *blood*, whether of a god or of a son of a god, that it can save millions by simply believing that which is absurd and untrue? Is this the highest idea of religion and the most elevated thought of God that humanity is capable of conceiving? To many sensible people it is not, and fortunately the world, as it increases in intelligence and true knowledge, is fast discarding these ridiculous absurdities.

THE PROBABILITY OF THE STORY.

The apologists for Christianity, in their advocacy of the system, seem to take too much for granted. They are too much like Paley, and start out by saying, like him, "The apostles were thoroughly veracious men, and they tell us that they saw the things which are recorded in the gospels; therefore the gospels are historically true."

There is altogether too much assumption here, and too much jumping at conclusions without proof. We do not know that the apostles were thoroughly veracious men; on the other hand we know they were not, for they describe the same claimed incidents very differently. Some of them must, of necessity, testify untruthfully. Four contradictory statements of the same event cannot be given and all be true. We further know that the writers of the four gospels describe quite minutely incidents that they did not see, and never claimed to see, while other more remarkable events, which, it is elsewhere claimed, they were witnesses of, they never so much as mention.

Many of the most important features of the Christian story the evangelists do not pretend that they knew anything about, and some of them do not even allude to them. The remarkable conception on the part of the mother of Jesus and his divine paternity, is one of these instances. Mark and John do not give the slightest intimation that Jesus was divinely begotten, or that the Holy Ghost or the Highest held a private interview of a peculiar nature with the Virgin Mary, and that in this way a new god was begotten and made flesh in a similar manner that old Jove manipulated with numbers of his female favorites of the genus homo. Matthew and Luke are the only ones who have anything to say upon this delicate subject, and they do not relate it all alike, nor do they give us the slightest intimation how they come by the knowledge they attempt to impart. Matthew bases the whole story upon a dream that he says Joseph the carpenter had, while Luke has it that it was a vision that Mary had. Matthew does not tell us how he knew what Joseph had dreamed sixty years or more before he wrote; nor does Luke

tell us how he acquired the information that Mary either saw the angel Gabriel or the Holy Ghost himself. Neither of them pretend in the slightest degree that they had received a hint of the facts from heaven, or that they wrote by inspiration. They do not deem it necessary to describe to us how Matthew knew what passed in the brain of Joseph when he was asleep, and how Luke came to know what conversation took place between Gabriel and Mary, or what between the Holy Ghost and the Virgin.

A story so loosely told nowadays—so utterly unsustained by proofs or corroborating facts—would not be entitled to the slightest credit or recognition by intelligent people. The narrator of such idle tales would be hooted at by men of judgment and common sense. And yet these vague, unsupported, improbable, and impossible stories are the foundation upon which rests the structure of the great system of Christianity. The whole thing has only a dream and a vision to fall back upon, and these not narrated alike by the two persons who assume to tell us about events of which they could not possibly know anything. And when we come to find out that these wild stories, these improbable legends, were not written by Matthew and Luke, and that their gospels had not a known existence till the year 170, or later—one hundred and fifty years after the mythical character, Jesus, had passed away—we inevitably become more and more impressed with the wholly incredible nature of the story and the religious system built upon it. They seem entitled to little more credit and consideration than the other mythological creations and systems that have existed for the past four thousand years.

Among others of the incidents in the life of Jesus upon which there is marked disagreement on the part of the four evangelists are, as was shown in the article on the Bible in Volume I, the account of his resurrection and ascension. The first is differently stated by them, and the two that say anything of the latter do not agree, and two say nothing of the affair, as though it was a matter of no consequence. A story so incorrectly and contradictorily told cannot justly be entitled to confidence and credit.

Two entirely different accounts of the genealogy of Jesus are given by Matthew and Luke, in which they attempt to show that Jesus was a lineal descendant of David, but this neither of them accomplishes in the slightest degree, for Matthew gives forty-two generations between David and Jesus, and Luke twenty seven, and they name entirely different sources and lines whence the descent came, Matthew starting with Solomon and Rehoboam after David, and ending with Matthan and Jacob before Joseph; while Luke makes him descend from David's son Nathan, ending with Heli, the father of Joseph. If Solomon was the son of David from whom Joseph descended, then it was not Nathan; if it was Nathan, then it was not Solomon. With all the remarkable ability that can be ascribed to Jesus, he could not possibly have descended from both Solomon and Nathan. And again, if Joseph was the son of Jacob, he could not also be the son of Heli. Even the stepfather of a Jesus could not be the son of two men. But even if it could be possible that Joseph descended from both Solomon and Nathan, if he was the son of two brothers, and they the descendants of two other brothers, it in no wise effects the genealogy of Jesus, for, by all the claims that are set up, he had nothing more to do with the paternity of Jesus than with the sons of Zebedee or any other man. How absurd, then, in Matthew and Luke in pretending to give the genealogy of Jesus to give that of his stepfather. It is probably a very fitting beginning for such an improbable story.

It is not necessary, perhaps, to recount here the great number of disagreements and contradictions of the writers of the four gospels; this was done at considerable length in the articles on Jesus Christ and the Bible, in Vol. I, to which the reader is again referred. The discrepancies refer to the conception, birth, and infancy of Jesus; pretended fulfilment of prophecies; the nature and reliability of dreams; chronology, genealogy, and geography; the home of Joseph and Mary; the annunciation; the silence of Mary; the conception and birth of John the Baptist; the place of the birth of Jesus; the time of his birth; the tax of Cyrenius; the journey to Jerusalem; the search for the child Jesus; the

performance of miracles; the astonishment of the doctors; the acquisition of learning by Jesus; the inability of Mary to understand her son's questions; the early occupation of Jesus; date of the mission of John the Baptist; date of his imprisonment; relative ages of John and Jesus; the baptism of Jesus; the intimacy between John and Jesus; the mission of the two disciples of John to Jesus; the estimate of John by Jesus; the motives assigned for the death of the Baptist; the place of his execution; accounts of the temptation of Jesus by the devil; the forty days' fast; the scene and locality of Jesus' mission, the first three writers making it Galilee, the fourth Jerusalem; order and time of various incidents; the movements of Jesus; the duration of his ministry unknown; the calling of the disciples; the first miracle, changing water into wine; the miraculous draught of fishes; the number and rank of the apostles; the primacy of Peter; the precedence of James over John; the mission of the seventy disciples, the mission being known but to one of the evangelists; Jesus, in his own estimation, as a Messiah; his pre-existence; his relation to the Mosaic law and to the Gentiles; his relations to the Samaritans; the Sermon on the Mount; the sermon on the plain; his beatitudes; maledictions pronounced; the Lord's prayer; his parables; his discourses; conversation with the woman of Samaria; conversation with Nicodemus; prediction relating to the crucifixion; discourse after the cure at the pool of Bethesda; the anointing of Jesus; the casting out of devils; the destruction of the swine; curing blindness; curing of lepers; the raising of the dead; the raising of Lazarus; the feeding of the multitudes; the cursing of the fig-tree; walking on the water; the transfiguration; the appearance of Moses and Elias; the journey from Galilee to Jerusalem; positive contradictions; the sojourn at Bethany; the anointing of Jesus; the miraculous finding of the ass; the number of animals ridden; two triumphal entries; predictions of Jesus; the prediction of his resurrection contradicted by the subsequent conduct of the disciples; contradicted by the conduct of the women; incidents of his resurrection; the number of persons by whom seen; predictions respecting the second advent of Jesus; the

enemies of Jesus ; effects of the ministry of Jesus ; the treachery of Judas ; formation of his design ; the manner in which the betrayal was effected ; the alleged death of Judas ; preparation for the Passover ; the last supper ; the agony of Jesus ; the praying in Gethsemane ; the arrest in the garden ; the persons present ; the smiting of Malchus, the servant of the high-priest ; the conduct of the priests and elders ; the flight of the disciples ; Jesus before the chief-priests, when the examination was held ; false witnesses ; the denial of Peter ; the trial before Pilate ; the charges brought against Jesus ; appearance of Jesus before Herod Antipas ; the message of Pilate's wife ; sentence by Pilate, and his conduct ; the crucifixion, where executed ; the bearing of the cross ; what was given Jesus to drink ; his exclamation of despair ; the two malefactors ; the penitent thief ; the superscription ; the division of the garments ; the lots cast for the seamless robe ; the conduct of the spectators ; the absence of the apostles ; the death and burial ; the earthquake ; the rending of the temple veil ; the raising of the saints from their graves ; the spear-wound in the side of Jesus ; the petition of Joseph of Arimathea ; the watch at the grave of Jesus ; the resurrection ; the appearance of Jesus after the resurrection ; the contradictory statements of what occurred after the resurrection ; the ascension ; the return into Galilee.

On all, or nearly all, of the foregoing subjects there are contradictions or discrepancies of statement. The incidents as related by one are differently told by another, or silence maintained upon the subject. Events narrated by one or more as matters of great importance are entirely ignored by others. Transactions as told by one are positively contradicted by another, and differently narrated. It would require considerable space to point these all out, one by one ; quite a number were designated in the first volume, which will subserve our purpose, sufficient, at all events, to show that there is no accuracy, and but little agreement, in the four gospels.

It is perhaps sufficient to say that a careful examination of the gospel story as told by the four narrators will prove fatal to all the theological systems that have been built upon it.

Such a scrutiny will inevitably show that the traditions at the beginning and end of the story are altogether unhistorical, while of the nativity and infancy, the incidents between them, and the events following the crucifixion nothing is known with satisfactory certainty. The character ascribed to Jesus is mostly gentle, amiable, and lovely; but there are marked exceptions, and there are too strong proofs of untruthfulness in the narratives to admit their statements being taken as tolerable human testimony, much less a careful rendition of events from the home of divinity, supposed to be in the ethereal regions.

The most marked disagreements are between the three synoptic narratives and the fourth ascribed to John. If the three are to be taken as mainly truthful, the fourth must be discarded as a fiction. If the object of the three is to comfort, to teach, to purify, the last tends to confuse, perplex, and befog. In the three synoptic gospels there is at least an appearance of a historical account, and there is in the main some degree of agreement, but the fourth gospel is of an entirely different character; it gives a different set of discourses, a different list of miracles, another system of philosophy, another locality where the mission of Jesus was performed, and is entirely different in nearly every particular.

Historically, this contrast, this contradiction, is most important in arriving at a correct conclusion as to the truth and reliability of the gospel story. To a man of fair and searching mind it must be apparent that two utterly antagonistic accounts of what purports to be the same events cannot be from the same source. Scott, in his "Life of Jesus," asks these questions: "Is it possible that two modes of teaching so utterly antagonistic should characterize the same teacher? Is it possible, also, that one who had put forth in the Sermon on the Mount a seemingly complete summary of his faith, and a complete code of moral practice, should, in that sermon, make not the slightest reference to any of those great topics which form the burden of the Johannine discourses? To these questions the reply ordinarily furnished is (1) that the synoptic evangelists were incapable of appreciating or recollecting the higher teaching which fastened itself on the memory only of

John; and (2) that the persons to whom these Johannine discourses were addressed were better fitted to follow his meaning than were the rude and untaught peasantry of Galilee. Both pleas are inconclusive. It is quite possible that among the hearers of a great teacher or an eloquent orator there will be some who will follow him more fully, and give shape to the highest elements in his teaching; but probably it is impossible to produce a single instance in which the reports, even from men of the duller sort, would lead us to suppose that the higher elements never existed. Xenophon was a man intellectually by no means the equal of Plato; nevertheless it is supposed that his account of Socrates is far more historical than the picture drawn by Plato, though even from the narrative of Xenophon we should be quite prepared to say that there could be and must have been a more abstruse and metaphysical side to the teachings of Socrates. But from the synoptic gospels we should never be led to expect the mysterious doctrines which form almost exclusively the topics of the fourth gospel. We have nothing in the former about the Eternal Logos, or the new birth; nothing about life flowing from God to believers in his son, and through the son only; nothing of his pre-existence in glory before the world was. And while these high doctrines are absent from the former, it is singular that they should closely correspond with the philosophy which, before the lifetime of Jesus, had sprung up on the soil of Alexandria. It is also singular that the evangelist who thus exhibits Jesus in an aspect unknown to others, should also assign to him works and actions of most of which the rest have seemingly never so much as heard. But further, we cannot allow the plea which rests on intellectual superiority of the Jews and Galileans, for the very simple reason that it is nowhere manifest in the gospel. The Rabbi Nicodemus is as dull and carnal as any of those who listened to Jesus on the shores of Tiberias; and the multitude of the Jews in the fourth gospel misunderstood him far more persistently than the Galileans. If we conclude that Jesus did not employ both these modes of teaching, then one of them must be rejected as unhistorical. Which of the two, then, are we to regard as

really belonging to him? Surely not that of the fourth gospel. To dwell on mystical doctrines is not the way to rouse the attention or enlist the sympathies of ordinary men. The conversation with Nicodemus is in no respect trustworthy. It occurs at an earlier stage in the ministry than the conversation with the Samaritan woman, and in this also, unless we are to suppose that the address to Nicodemus ends with verse 12 of chapter iii (and there is nothing to warrant any such conclusion), Jesus declares himself to be the son of God, given for the life of the world, who has come down from heaven, all who do not believe in him being condemned already. Thus then in the first four chapters of the gospel we have a knowledge of the Messiahship of Jesus, and of his eternal generation as the Divine Logos, possessed by the Baptist, by Andrew, and the beloved disciple, by Peter and Nathanael, by Nicodemus, and by the woman of Samaria, with her fellow-townsmen, whereas in the synoptics none attained to the fullness of this knowledge before the crucifixion, or even arrived at any consciousness of his Messiahship until a late period of his ministry. Indeed, of the knowledge of his pre-existence as the Logos, there is no sign in any part even of the Acts of the Apostles. The knowledge of the one and the ignorance of the other cannot be reconciled.

"But further, the writers of the synoptic gospels know nothing of Nicodemus. This is the more surprising, not only because Nicodemus is a rabbi of high reputation, and because as a member of the Sanhedrim he stands alone in seeking to get a fair hearing for Jesus (vii, 50), but because he shares with Joseph of Arimathea the task of preparing the body of Jesus for burial (xix, 39). The part taken by Joseph is well known to Matthew (xxvii, 57); nor is it easy to see how, if he had ever heard of the facts, he could have forgotten to mention that Nicodemus was at least as zealous as Joseph. At once, then, the unhistorical character of Nicodemus throws a grave doubt on the genuineness of the conversation. How the idea of such a conversation was suggested we are in no way bound to explain. The conversation itself presents many difficulties similar to those involved with that of the Samaritan woman. Nicodemus is made (iii, 4) to

express his surprise at the need of a new birth for those who are to enter the kingdom of God. This is incredible in a "Master in Israel." The rabbis were perfectly familiar with the phrase as denoting the conversion of heathen to the worship of Jehovah. To make the narrative harmonize with this fact, Nicodemus should have been represented as expressing wonder, not at the idea of, but at the necessity of, this new creation for an Israelite, who regarded himself as possessed of an inalienable right to the divine kingdom. But utterly forgetting that metaphorical sense of the words with which he was familiar, Nicodemus construes the words as denoting the need of physical new birth, with an absurdity even greater than that displayed by the misconstruction of the Samaritan woman. And so when Jesus hightens the mystery by a still more transcendental utterance, Nicodemus again asks, "*How* can these things be?" when, if he had been true to his Jewish knowledge and belief, he should only have said: "*Why* must these things be? Why do you impose on *us* that necessity of a change which is needful only for those who are not within the circle of the covenant made with Abraham?" Thus, then, every answer of Jesus tends more and more to convict Nicodemus of stupidity and folly, and to glorify Jesus at the expense of his hearer. The method and purpose are alike wholly different from those which mark the synoptic gospels.

"In answer to the last question of Nicodemus, Jesus, having told him that he cannot expect to understand heavenly things if he fails rightly to apprehend earthly things, then proceeds to declare to him the mode and purpose of his own death. The son of man, like the brazen serpent, is to be lifted up upon the cross for the salvation of the world; and thus we have Jesus revealing to one who is not even among the number of his disciples knowledge which, according to the synoptics, he did not impart to any of the apostles till a much later period. Whether Nicodemus, who had understood every word thus far addressed to him, would understand a reference to an event still future, is a question which we need scarcely ask, and the startling contrast between this method and that earnest simplicity which marks the teaching of Jesus

in the other gospels renders further comment superfluous. It is not made clear that Jesus informed Nicodemus who this son of man was who had come down from heaven, and at the same time was in heaven. The evangelist apparently assumes that Nicodemus would understand of himself that this speaker was this heavenly and omnipresent son of man. But from verse 16 onward, Jesus proceeds to tell of a mysteriously only begotten son, whom God gave in his love to the world—a topic familiar to the writer of John's epistles, but surely anachronistic where it stands.

“This discourse, delivered after the healing of the impotent man at the pool of Bethesda, contains the defense of Jesus for working that cure on the Sabbath day. Here, too, the arguments are entirely different from any employed in the synoptic gospels. In the latter they are all practical, and refer to the taking of animals to water, or pulling them out of pits on the Sabbath day, as well as the eating of shew-bread by David. But in John v, 17, instead of the practical pleas we have a mystical argument based on the divine nature. The Father is unceasingly working in his creation, and the Eternal Son must, therefore, always be working also. This principle of Alexandrian metaphysics was familiar, doubtless, to Philo, but we may fairly question whether it would be appreciated by any of those who heard Jesus at Jerusalem. Here, then, as elsewhere in the fourth gospel, the answer of Jesus is made to run immediately into a discussion on his own person and on his eternal relation to God the Father. The utter absence of such discussions from the other gospels is a circumstance which must be accounted for, and which, if unexplained, destroys all claims of the Johannine gospel to historical authority.”

After taking up one by one many other instances where the language and narrative of the fourth gospel are wholly unlike the other three, our author concludes in this wise: “On the whole, then, we have in the synoptics methods of teaching not alien to the character of an unlearned but intelligent Galilean peasant, and even when they were obscured by metaphor or hyperbole, driving straight at a moral mark. We have discourses which throughout are practical, which teach the peo-

ple how to regard the Mosaic law, in what relation they stand to God, and how they may do his will. In the fourth gospel we have a series of mystical addresses grounded on principles established by the Alexandrian philosophy, turning chiefly on the person of Christ, the pre-existence of the eternal Logos, and its relations to the father, and presenting the series of recurring contrasts already noted. These discourses, far from tending to instruct and enlighten the hearers, are calculated to irritate and repel them. The connection of the topics is chiefly verbal, and they are so arranged as to exhibit most forcibly the dullness and folly of all with whom Jesus is brought into contact. When his hearers misunderstand him, Jesus immediately utters some saying more enigmatical and obscure than those which have preceded it; and the rabbi Nicodemus is described as no more able to fathom his meaning than the Samaritan woman or the rude Galilean peasantry.

"Nor must it be forgotten that long dialogues are amongst the most difficult things to remember. Nay, it may be safely said that unless they are taken down immediately it is absolutely certain that they will not be correctly repeated. But there is not the faintest evidence that the discourses of Jesus were so taken down; and, as if this were not enough to show how unhistorical the Johannine discourses are, we are confronted with the further and crowning difficulty already noticed, that the Baptist and Jesus and the writer of John's epistles all used precisely the same language and think in precisely the same way. It would be hard, indeed, to imagine more conclusive proof of the fact that the discourses generally are the work of the evangelists, and not of the speakers to whom they are ascribed."

After noticing some of the disagreements between the synoptic gospels, he continues: "But a comparison of these three gospels tends greatly to disparage the fourth. In the former the multitudes are generally highly favorable to Jesus; in John he commonly arouses their anger. In the former they are astonished at the authority of his teaching; in the latter they commonly try to stone him. In the former his fame is spread rapidly and easily abroad; in the latter the

evangelist is careful to say that all his words and works produced no impression. In the former the people follow him from all parts; in the latter the Jews send out officers to seize him. In the one his discourses generally elicit enthusiastic approval; in the latter they provoke curses and maledictions. But all this enmity and all the machinations are frustrated in the fourth gospel, not by any caution or reserve or prudence on the part of Jesus, but for the supernatural reason that his hour was not yet come. Jesus is thus enabled to move about unharmed until the hour arrives when he must make the final sacrifice. This miraculous repression is seemingly the only reason for describing the state of things so utterly different from that which is depicted in the synoptic gospels; and thus from another path we are brought back to the conclusion that the fourth gospel is not historical" (pp. 153-173).

Without taking time and space to examine the large number of discrepancies and disagreements in the four gospels, enough has undoubtedly been said to show that they harmonize sadly, that there is great uncertainty as to authorship and the time when written, and as there is not reason to suppose they had an existence before the latter part of the second century, they are really of but small value, and go but a little way toward settling the very doubtful problem whether such a person as Jesus had an actual existence.

PAUL THE SUPPOSED AUTHOR OF CHRISTIANITY.

The number is not few who believe Paul to have been the founder of what is called the Christian system. Jesus, even if he flourished eighteen hundred and fifty years ago, organized no churches; and from his language concerning the end of the world, which was right at hand, and the speedy coming of the son of man, it is clear that he had no thought of organizing churches as the method of establishing the kingdom of heaven. Saul, of Tarsus, afterward called Paul, was the principal originator of these small sects. He never saw Jesus except in vision, and it is extremely doubtful if he ever

saw him in that way. He did not build upon the knowledge he received from the apostles, for he asserted that he consulted not with flesh and blood :

"But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man, for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. i, 11, 12). "But when it pleased God . . . to reveal his son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood. Neither went I up to Jerusalem, to them which were apostles before me" (Gal. i, 15-17); "to whom [the original apostles] we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour, that the truth of the gospel might continue with you; but of those who seemed to be somewhat, whatsoever they were, it maketh no matter to me. God accepteth no man's person, for they who seemed to be somewhat, in conference added nothing to me" (Gal. ii, 5, 6). The self-conceited Paul was, nevertheless, willing to be made acquainted with the apostles, and introduced to them by Barnabas. "And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he essayed to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way" (Acts ix, 26, 27). He at that time deemed it a prudent course of policy to submit to a conference, and accept a commission from the apostles to preach to the Gentiles. "And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship, that we should go unto the heathen" (Gal. ii, 9). This certainly has very much the appearance of "conferring with flesh and blood." It appears also that he misrepresented the sources of his apostleship and mission to the Gentiles. If further contradiction of Paul's assumption of the revelation of Jesus Christ concerning his mission to the Gentiles were necessary, it may be found in the language of Jesus to his disciples: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations" (Matt. xxviii, 19); and again, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark xvi, 15); still further, "But ye

shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts i, 8). From this it is evident that all the disciples were commissioned to preach to the Gentiles, and Paul's claim that he alone was set apart for that purpose is untrue.

We read that when Barnabas took Paul to the disciples at Jerusalem he declared unto them how he (Paul) had seen the Lord in the way. Paul never claimed to have seen Jesus in the flesh, but that he had seen him in a vision, and he also speaks of it as "when it pleased God . . . to reveal his son in me." It thus appears that his knowledge of Jesus came through visions and revelations, and not by ordinary acquaintance and fellowship. He never specifies when, where, or who was with him when he saw Jesus, but in general terms, "As I went to Damascus." He continues the account of his seeing Jesus thus: "At midday, O king, I saw in the way a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, shining round about me and them which journeyed with me. And when we were fallen to the earth I heard a voice speaking unto me and saying in the Hebrew tongue, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? . . . And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest" (Acts xxvi, 13-15). All this he calls a vision: "Whereupon, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision" (idem 19).

It has been truly said Paul was intensely arrogant. His own language proclaims it: "For I speak unto you, Gentiles, . . . I magnify mine office" (Rom. xi, 13). "Wherefore, I beseech you, be ye followers of me" (1 Cor. iv, 16). To whom ye forgive anything, I forgive also; for if I forgave anything, to whom I forgave it, for your sakes, forgave I it in the person of Christ" (2 Cor. ii, 10). "If any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed" (2 Thes. iii, 14).

As a teacher, Paul was intolerant and vindictive. His conceit had much to do with this overbearing spirit he manifested on all occasions. He applauded charity to the stars, but

knew little of the practice of it. He took the pains to write to the Corinthians that he "was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles" (2 Cor. xi, 5). "I say again, Let no man think me a fool; if otherwise, yet as a fool receive me, that I may boast myself a little" (xi, 16). "Are they Hebrews? So am I. Are they Israelites? So am I. Are they seed of Abraham? So am I. Are they members of Christ? (I speak as a fool) I am more" (xi, 22, 23). "I am become a fool in glorifying; ye have compelled me, . . . for in nothing am I behind the very chiefest apostles" (2 Cor. xii, 11). Before his conversion Paul was a bitter, cruel, and murderous partisan, and after his conversion he cherished the same spirit. He had been a party to the murder of Stephen, but after he had met with so great a change he lets his enemies off with a cursing, and hoped they might smoke for it in the next world. "Alexander the Coppersmith did me much evil; the Lord reward him according to his works" (2 Tim. iv, 14). Of those who spoke slanderously against him he said, their "damnation is just" (Rom. iii, 8). If any others preached the gospel according to their belief in it, he said, "If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed" (Gal. i, 9). "If any man love not the Lord Jesus Christ, let him be Anathema, Maran-atha" (1 Cor. xvi, 22). The Christian Paul was equally as bitter, arrogant, and domineering as was the Jewish Saul of Tarsus. His name had changed, but not his nature.

He was intent upon making proselytes, even if in so doing he should be forced to make principle bend to policy. He even made a boast of his duplicity and time-serving spirit: "And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. . . . to the weak, became I as weak, that I might gain the weak. I am made all things to all men" (1 Cor. ix, 20, 22). In thus professing to be all things to all men, he became hypocritical. That he might gain favor with some, he pretended to set aside the Mosaic law, and declared that "by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified" (Rom. iii. 20). "Behold, I Paul say unto you that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall

profit you nothing" (Gal. v, 2); and yet he circumcised Timothy, "because of the Jews which were in those quarters" (Acts xvi, 3).

On one occasion, as related in Acts (xxi), he agreed to dissemble and make it appear that he "walked orderly" and "kept the law." His deception, however, did not succeed, for there were many who came into the temple who knew him as a repudiator of the law, so they "took Paul and drew him out of the temple" (Acts xxi, 30). Alluding to his achievements in the art of proselyting, he says to the Corinthians (2 xii, 16): "Nevertheless, being crafty, I caught you with guile." "The end justifies the means," was the policy according to which he regulated his practice. Policy, craft, and guile were not all he was capable of; he could lie for his own cause and then justify it: "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner? And not rather (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say), let us do evil that good may come" (Rom. iii, 7, 8).

The report, whether slanderous or not, undoubtedly was true, as we have seen from the practice of Paul of becoming all things to all men, and of being crafty and catching the Corinthians with guile. He was a zealot, and was not over-scrupulous of the means he used in making converts to his doctrines. The paramount object with him was partisan success.

Of his doctrines of election and reprobation, of the fall of man in Adam, and the restoration, or salvation of all men through Jesus, of the resurrection, immortality, and general judgment-day, and other doctrines, it is not necessary to speak; but to some of his rules which were to be observed by the churches, attention may properly be directed.

Paul did not heartily approve of marriage. It is true that at one time he said, "Marriage is honorable in all" (Heb. xiii, 4); yet it was a common thing for him to disparage it by indirect reflections upon it: "I say, therefore, to the unmarried and widows, it is good for them if they abide even as I" [unmarried] (1 Cor. vii, 8). "Art thou loosed from a wife, seek not a wife" (1 Cor. vii, 27). At one time

he spoke of it as allowable for widows to marry again: "If her husband be dead, she is at liberty to be married to whom she will" (1 Cor. vii, 39). And on another occasion he says: "But the younger widows refuse, for when they have begun to wax wanton against Christ, they will marry, having damnation because they have cast off their first faith" (1 Tim. v, 11, 12). His decisions are not impartial between the sexes, but generally adverse to woman, and in favor of man. The equality of husband and wife, with their equal rights and privileges, was never dreamed of by him. Woman, according to his prejudices, was in every way inferior, and in subjection to man. He was to rule over her, and as a good wife her paramount duty was to obey him: "Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence." And listen to the reason he gives for the abject subjection of woman: "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression" (1 Tim. ii, 13, 14).

Upon this old, self-contradictory, and absurd tradition of the origin of man, he bases the right to make woman a slave to man. His opinion, indeed, could be passed over as a trifling matter had not millions been compelled to a servitude frequently more bitter than chattel slavery. The enormity of wrong inflicted upon woman in consequence of the tyrannical teaching of this man Saul of Tarsus the world shall never know. A very large part of her wrongs in the present day may be attributed to his writings: "Let your women keep silence in the churches, for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience. . . . And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home, for it is a shame for women to speak in the church" (1 Cor. xiv, 34, 35).

According to his instructions the husband was actually lord and master over his wife: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head [master] of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. Therefore, as the church is subject unto Christ, so let

the wives be [subject] to their own husbands in everything" (Eph. v, 22-24). "I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ, and the head [master] of every woman is man" (1 Cor. xi, 3).

Nowhere in his epistles does Paul uphold woman as the equal of man, or do her simple justice. "For a man, indeed, ought not to cover his head, forasmuch as he is the image and glory of God; but the woman is the glory of the man" (1 Cor. xi, 7). And yet the tradition from which he gets his knowledge of the creation of man expressly declares that both man and woman were made in the image of God: "So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them" (Gen. i, 27). "Neither was the man created for the woman, but the woman for the man" (1 Cor. xi, 9). This makes it all plain. Woman was made to be a slave for the lord of the creation. In the light of this gospel we can readily understand how it happened heretofore, and even now among rude people, that woman has been hitched up alongside of an ox or an ass and made to draw the plow. She was created for the man, and he of necessity must use her wherever she can be of service to him. And this diabolism has been for eighteen hundred years called "inspiration!" the "Word of the Lord," the "Word of Life." Happily for the present age there are many who have a better inspiration and a nobler word of life.

In keeping with this spirit of oppression of woman is his approval of caste and submission to tyranny and slavery: "Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called" (1 Cor. vii, 20). To obey this would be to check every laudable ambition, and stay all progress of man and society. The very reverse of this contains more truth: "Let every man strive to rise above his present condition."

"Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God" (Rom. xiii, 1). If our forefathers had obeyed this scripture we would not have our present republican government. This passage has been a gigantic club in the hands of tyrants and monsters with which they have beaten the common people into the dust, into slavish service, where they have cringed in poverty, ignorance,

and misery. But among people who believe that "the powers that be are ordained of God" (idem), there is no great progress, and invariably the condition of the common people is but little above that of serfs and slaves. If any are in a state of slavery, they are advised to abide in their condition: "Let as many servants [slaves] as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor" (1 Tim. vi, 1). "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters, according to the flesh, with fear and trembling" (Eph. vi, 5).

An outline of Paul's character and career will not produce a very flattering picture of him. He began his public life by consenting and becoming accessory to the murder of Stephen: "And many of the saints did I shut up in prison, having received authority from the chief priests. And when they were put to death I gave my voice against them" (Acts xxvi, 10).

Some time afterward he became converted in a marvelous way, and assumed apostleship and a mission to preach to the Gentiles: "Paul, called to be an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God" (1 Cor. i, 1). Paul, an apostle (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father)" (Gal. i, 1). "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (idem i, 12). He had a vision or a dream, and upon the strength of it he changed his conduct from "entering into every house and haling men and women," and committing them to prison, and now, by preaching, he drew men and women into his churches. And if they refused to obey him he pronounced horrid imprecations upon them, and assured them their damnation was just.

Very early in his career as an independent gospeler, his preaching contributed to the growing schisms of the church. There were four or more small sects, some of Paul, others of Apollos, a third party of Cephas, and still another of Christ. But Paul's party was the one which preserved and perpetuated all the truth, and so he turned bitterly upon those other Christian sects and said: "But though we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accused." He has not

modified his bitter, persecuting spirit. He is the same relentless foe to all who oppose him. He was equally intense in his self-conceit and boastfulness. He was not a "whit behind the very chiefest apostles." He claimed to be a Hebrew of the Hebrews, and might, with still greater propriety, have confessed that he was a bigoted partisan of all bigoted partisans. His great endeavor was to get followers, and so he becomes all things to all men, that he may make proselytes. To dissemble and lie were justifiable if they contributed to the glory of God.

His notions of marriage, of the relations between man and woman, and their equal rights, duties, and privileges; of the duty of men to struggle for higher conditions and relations in life; of the obligation of those under the heel of oppression to rise and overthrow the tyrant, or at least to escape from his cruelty and power, of those great truths the thirteenth apostle, who was born out of due time, seems to be totally ignorant. The common sense people of the nineteenth century are assured that his teachings and stories are out of "due time" now. As fabulous we relegate them, with ten thousand other stories, to regions of mythology.

Paul was born at Tarsus, in Cilicia, a city renowned for Grecian culture, of which Paul, however, had not even a smattering. When quite a young man he came to Jerusalem to receive the higher theological training, and was said to have been a pupil of Gamaliel the elder. According to the Jewish customs of those days, his theological pursuits did not relieve him from the obligation of learning a trade. He was a tent maker, or rather a weaver of that coarse tent-cloth called *cilicium*. In Jerusalem he soon showed his inborn fanaticism by seeking distinction in the persecution of the harmless followers of the reputed Jesus of Nazareth.

"Let the reader imagine himself in Jerusalem, . . . about the year A. D. 34. There is unusual tumult in the vicinity of the temple. A large crowd has gathered, and, stirred up by some strong provocation, is swayed like the billows in a storm. As we approach we see a young man, who is trying to raise his voice above the din. There is something very striking in his looks. He is pale, but firm. His

eyes gleam with an unearthly light. As the crowd surges and threatens he is calm. His thoughts and looks are directed more to heaven than to earth. But in this crowd there is a young man of an entirely different stamp. He is excited and angry. His eyes are red with rage, and he is seen moving among the crowd like an incendiary. The crisis came, and poor Stephen stood first on the list of Christian martyrs. This little blear-eyed, angry man is not quite satisfied. Like the tiger that has tasted blood, he thirsts for more. He goes about Jerusalem like a madman. He fills the prison with men and women who believed with Stephen." "By his assertions, mainly, they were scattered from Jerusalem along the coast of Phœnicia, Syria, and Cilicia. But Paul's fanaticism had no rest; he heard that those scattered from Jerusalem were gathered in the Grecian cities, and he obtained letters from the high-priest to the heads of the various synagogues, by which he was authorized to take all Nazarenes wherever found and deliver them to the court of Jerusalem, the highest court in religious matters. With these letters he went to Damascus, but before he entered this city a sudden change came over him." "On his way, while breathing out threatenings and slaughter, he is struck down in his mad career. . . . Everything is changed in a moment." "He had a vision of the crucified Jesus, and henceforth became as zealous and fanatical in the propagation of the new doctrine as formerly he was in its persecution." "The fiery stream of burning lava which had rushed in one direction now turned and ran with equal violence the other way."

"Of this vision the Acts give three contradictory versions (ix, 3, ff; xxii, 6, ff; xxvi, 12, ff). According to which a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, suddenly shone round about him, and a conversation between him and an apparition took place. The legendary nature of these relations is obvious, the words of Jesus, in one relation, are put into the mouth of Ananias in the other; here the companions of Paul remained standing, there they fall to the ground; in one relation they hear the voice but see nothing, in the other they see the light but hear nothing. His own version of this event is simple enough (Gal. i, 12, ff, 1 Cor. xv, 8; ix, 1).

He saw Jesus just as all the other apostles had seen him. This gives us a clearer idea of what the apostles have seen, and what the apparitions of the resurrected Jesus were."

We have it in evidence that Paul was weak-bodied, continually complaining of his ailments, especially of one, which must have been very annoying to him, to wit, "The thorn in his flesh, the messenger of Satan that buffeted him," whatever that might have been. Such ailments and such hardships and fatigues as he imposed upon himself could only be withstood and battled against by his irrepressibly volcanic spirit. But for this immense strain he had to pay a dire penalty in the rack and ruin of his nervous system, which made him subject to trances and hallucinations, of which he often speaks; for instance, 2 Cor. xii, 2, ff, "I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago (whether in the body, I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell; God knoweth); how that he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." This was the man who had traveled through the desert eight days from Jerusalem and was now approaching the outskirts of Damascus the beautiful. There he had to resume his cruel work of persecution. All the way thither his mind was of course occupied with the victims of his rage—the poor Jesuists who believed Jesus to be the Messiah. Of Jesus himself he knew next to nothing—no more, probably, than he had learned from the exclamations and confessions of those he had persecuted. "He had seen the joyful sufferings of those who persevered, and heard the recantations which those weaker ones had uttered with trembling lips and agony of mind. He had probably witnessed similar visions of some of his victims, who, in the midst of their suffering, were so carried away by their ecstasy and wrought-up imagination that they saw the heavens open and the resurrected Christ come down with the clouds of the sky, as the Acts (vii, 56) tell us of Stephen. Pondering over all these experiences, his excited brain and wearied nerves and heated imagination created the same vision; he saw the crucified Jesus whom he persecuted, and at once his passionate soul was thrown into the opposite direction. He came to Damascus, not as a new man, but with a

new faith and new convictions, for which he would do battle with the same energy and the same fiery spirit as he did for the old. Without conversing with any of the apostles, or taking advice from any of the adherents of Jesus, he at once entered upon his new career of preaching the gospel of the resurrected Christ (Messiah), as he understood it, according to his knowledge of the scriptures and the Jewish traditions. That the gospel of Jesus and his disciples was quite different from his own was nothing to him." How different from and antagonistic to the Jesuism of Peter and the apostles was this new gospel of Paul will further plainly appear from the following able presentation, drawn from the same clear source whence we have already so abundantly availed ourselves:

"The disciples of Jesus alway held, as did Jesus himself, that the most faithful compliance with the laws of God, as taught by Judaism, was the only preparation for the world that was soon to come by some wonderful divine interposition; then all the concomitant circumstances that were to accompany the time of the Messiah, according to the Jewish traditions—as, for instance, the conversion of all nations to the belief in God—were likewise, by some miraculous powers, to be brought about. In the mean time Judaism had to be vigorously observed, together with those preparatory doctrines divulged by Jesus. But Paul was not the man to go for instruction to these simple fishermen; he was not to be influenced by any teacher. Jesus had appeared to him just as he had appeared to others, especially to the apostles; he had his revelations and visions, and these he was to preach. 'Jesus is the Messiah: he was innocently put to death; he has risen again, and will soon return to introduce the world to come.' This was all he knew and wanted to know of Jesus; and it was quite sufficient for him to found a new religion on these premises. . . . With these glad tidings he addressed himself to the Gentiles, who, after the appearance of the Messiah, were all to accept the Jewish religious and moral ideas. But the laws and institutions historically connected with, and, to a Jewish mind, inseparable from these ideas had no meaning to the heathen; they were a yoke too heavy to be borne. Paul, brought up among the heathen,

knew this better than anybody else ; and, fortunately, according to the theory that Jesus was the Messiah, the laws were superfluous. Jewish tradition had it that with the appearance of the Messiah all laws and institutions would cease. The laws and institutions, therefore, were abolished, and there was no hindrance for receiving the Gentiles into the bosom of the new faith without burdening them with the laws." He continued his preaching and work in Damascus and Arabia, in Tarsus and Antioch, which latter place was the real cradle of Christianity—a name soon adopted by the faithful themselves.

After taking his "new departure," Paul, in company with Barnabas, departed from Antioch (about A. D. 45) on an extensive mission to the Gentiles. They traversed the island of Cyprus, from which they passed into Asia Minor, and Paul preached a memorable sermon at Antioch, in Pisidia. Though violently persecuted, they converted many at Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, and returned in A. D. 47 to Antioch, in Syria, where they abode for a long time. In the course of a second apostolic journey he founded churches at Philippi and Thessalonica, and uttered a remarkable discourse at Athens. He also made many converts at Corinth, where he remained a year and a half, and whence, it is supposed, he wrote a letter to the Thessalonians. It is not necessary to follow him in all his travels; suffice it to say that he was accused of teaching another gospel. He was declared a heretic, and his converts were told, "Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses ye cannot be saved." After long disputes, however, a compromise was agreed upon between Paul and the original apostles, viz., that Paul should be received and acknowledged as an apostle of the heathen, who might remain free of the law, and be considered "proselytes of the gate." The disciples of Jesus, however, would continue to labor as the apostles of the Jews, for whom the law remained valid and binding. But such an expedient could not be otherwise than very unsatisfactory. Indeed, in time, "Paul and his gospel, still further liberalized, became almost intensely abhorred. He is represented as Balaam, the seducer of the people, and other not very flattering epithets are given to him. This opposition among the Jew-Christians

he has to explain to himself and his congregations. The easiest way of explaining it is, 'They are blinded.' Thus we have the rejection of Israel as a people, and the election of the Gentiles, as many of them as will believe. Christianity has abandoned her mother and thrown herself, without reserve, upon the heathen world. Henceforth her language is no longer Hebrew or Chaldean, no longer the language of Jesus, but Greek and Latin. The influence of heathenism—the consequence of Paul's doctrines—may be resisted yet awhile by the handful of Jew-Christians, but in the course of time they will have to yield. Heathenism more and more absorbs the new religion, and those truths brought over from Judaism are soon lost sight of, for they are swept away or buried under the deluge of paganism." Thus Renan.

When it is borne in mind that for a century and more before the Christian era there was a strong tendency among the Jews to divide and subdivide into sects and religious factions, it cannot be thought strange that the restless Paul should become a convert to a new religion, and then that his zeal and industry should prompt him to make earnest efforts to secure proselytes to the faith he had embraced. It matters little that he had persecuted the new religion which he afterward espoused. History gives us unnumbered instances of a similar character. We see it in our own time, both in the religious and political field. Men are very often leaving churches which they had previously belonged to and supported, and also joining and advocating those to which they had been bitterly opposed. It is so in the political world. Nothing is more common than for men to become most zealous adherents and defenders of the party they had for years most bitterly opposed and traduced, especially if by that course they see a probable chance for political preferment and profit. Paul might have seen indications in the new-fledged religious sect that it could be made to assume considerable proportions, as Constantine did nearly three centuries later. It is possible he discovered that the leaders of the new creed were not men of much natural ability, not calculated to make the sect successful, and he might have thought it needed a man of his

energy and ability to lead it to the conspicuous position it might be made to occupy. Possibly he was the Moody, the Pentecost, or the Hammond of that day; at all events he showed a fondness for proselyting and for founding and instructing churches.

With his thorough knowledge of Jewish theology, and of the various religious sects which pervaded not only Judea but the surrounding countries, as well as of the various pagan systems of religion which had existed in the world for hundreds and even a thousand years, he was better fitted to build up a new religious system than the unlearned fishermen who had hitherto been its principal teachers. It is not at all improbable that his active, enterprising mind saw in the early nebulous Christian element the material from which he could found churches and build up a powerful party. Possibly he did not gain—in arresting, imprisoning, and executing devout believers—the species of distinction most congenial to his nature. He might become convinced that it would be better for him to change front and espouse the cause he had persecuted. To effect this, a man who believed in “craft” and “guile,” who would give a “lie” the preference when by it a certain object could be better attained, could easily fix up a story of a vision by which a sudden conversion had been effected in his mind; in fact, just about that very thing would be what might be looked for under the circumstances. He was a man of quick perception, a man of expedients, a man of unscrupulousness, a man of purpose and energy. With these qualities the vision story could easily be concocted, and a persecutor thereby be changed to an apostle in a similar way as the reputed appearance of a cross in the heavens made the bloody and murderous Constantine a valorous Christian warrior and saint.

Far more improbable things have taken place in the world. Thousands of times have men invented plausible tales to cover a certain line of conduct, and to make their changed course appear consistent. Paul was a man capable of seeing a situation and of providing for the necessities that might arise. The statement that he had seen a vision, and that Jesus had appeared to him in the heavens, would satisfactorily

account for the sudden change in his conduct. A shrewd, designing man like Paul would easily adopt such a course, seeing thereby an excellent opportunity to become a leader in the new religion.

While there are thousands who honestly doubt whether such a person as Jesus had an actual existence, there are a much fewer number who doubt there was such a man as Paul. That he lived and preached Christianity orally and by writing epistles is pretty generally conceded. That he wrote about half of the epistles that are called by his name is also admitted. That a portion of them are not the productions of his mind is strongly insisted upon by the most learned students in that direction. That Paul helped to shape the Christian religion, and that his inculcations about the importance and superiority of faith, about the resurrection and a future life, have done more to establish the Christian dogmas and belief than did the teachings ascribed to Jesus, are as true as that his writings were many years anterior to the gospels in the New Testament. If any of the books comprising the New Testament canon may be regarded as genuine, as having been written by the person whose name they bear, they are the Epistles to the Romans, Corinthians, and Galatians. Those of which considerable doubt is entertained are Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and Thessalonians. Those almost certainly not by Paul are Timothy and Titus, while Hebrews is positively not his.

It is not to be supposed, however, that the doubtful epistles are any the less valuable for not having been penned by Paul, any the less inspired, any the less true, but the uncertainty of the authenticity and reliability of the New Testament canon is thereby established. Thus, while it is extremely unlikely that Paul is the author of much that is attributed to him, what he did write is much older than the gospels which narrate the career of Jesus. He did far more toward establishing Christianity and founding churches than did Jesus and all his apostles, and his writings to day are as high authority to the Christian devotee as anything ascribed to Jesus. There is at least a strong probability that Paul is the real author of the Christian system.

ESSENISM THE SUPPOSED ORIGIN OF
CHRISTIANITY.

Two or three centuries before the Christian era the Jews became divided into three principal sects, the Pharisees, Sadducees, and Essenes.

The PHARISEES, as the name in Hebrew signifies, *separated*, and they took this name to themselves because they claimed superior sanctity, and had therefore separated themselves from the wicked and immoral. They had great reverence for the traditionary law, and claimed also that there was a double meaning in the written law; one relating merely to external words, the other to their inward mystical significance. They were great sticklers for forms and ceremonies, washing, purification, fasts, etc. They would not under any circumstances eat bread with unwashed hands. If there was not water enough to both wash and drink, a devout Pharisee would almost die with thirst rather than not wash. They had numerous and hot controversies with the adherents of other sects upon the importance of numerous rites and concerning what articles were subject to tithes. Of mint, anise, and cummin, where others paid a hundredth part to the priests, they paid a tenth. They wore their robes longer than other people, and regarded themselves as much purer and better than others. Many of them when they walked the street took pains to keep very close to the wall so as not to come in contact with the impure whom they chanced to meet, lest by contact they should become defiled. Some wore a deep cap or hood shaped like a mortar, which came so far over the eyes that they could see nothing but their feet. Some walked with their eyes closed, lest they should be tempted by the sight of a woman. They attached great importance to prayer, and were frequently seen to offer up their prayers in the street and other public places. They adhered strictly to the worship of one God, though they believed in numerous spirits, good and bad. It was their belief that everything was predestined, and that man could do nothing without divine influence. They believed in the resurrection of the body, but confined it to the Jews only; other nations would remain in their graves. Some of them

held that the soul died with the body and would be raised with it. The general belief was that the souls of pious Jews were transferred at death to a region of paradise, where they would remain waiting till the Messiah recalled them to their bodies on the day of resurrection.

The SADDUCEES are said to have taken their name from Sadoc, or Sadducous, a disciples of Antogonus Sochoeus, who was conspicuous for his dislike of traditionary institutions and pious works of supererogation. He insisted that men ought to serve God from pure disinterested principles, and not for the sake of hire. Sadoc maintained that not merely promises of temporal prosperity, but the doctrine of future rewards appealed to the selfish feelings in man; that a person ought not to require or expect any compensation for his justice. He declared there would be no resurrection from the dead, and no future existence, insisting that the law of Moses claimed no such condition. The Sadducees adhered strongly to the written law, and claimed that the literal signification of the words was all that attached to them, and had no hidden mystical meaning. They held that the immortality of the soul and predestination were doctrines which Judasim had imbibed from foreign sources, and it was their wish to restore it to its original simplicity and truth. They held the sanctified and hypocritical practices and pretensions of the Pharisees in utter contempt. The Sadducees rejected the demonology of the Pharisees, and disregarded all the traditions and unwritten laws so highly prized by the latter. The tenets of these free-thinking philosophers, the Sadducees, were not in general so acceptable to the people as those of the Pharisees, yet many of the highest rank adopted them, and practiced great severity of manners and of life. Many members of the Sanhedrim were Sadducees.

The ESSENES, it is thought, derived their name from a Chaldean word signifying physician; for they were reputed to have uncommon skill in the use of medicine, as had the Therapeuts in Egypt, a very similar religious sect, from which the Essenes were supposed to have sprung. They called themselves "physicians of the body and the soul," and were so regarded by others. It is said they used various religious

ceremonies as a means of obtaining revelations concerning the nature of herbs and roots, the means of curing diseases. These ceremonies were supposed to be recorded in books which were kept secret from all but their own numbers. They were fewer in numbers than either of the two other sects, and by some authors were computed at four thousand.

Josephus and Philo give descriptions of the Essenes. They were an exclusive society, distinguished from the rest of the Jewish nation by an organization peculiar to themselves, and by a theory of life in which a severe asceticism and a rare benevolence to one another and to mankind in general were the most striking characteristics. They had fixed rules for initiation, a succession of separate grades within the limits of the society, and regulations for the conduct of their daily life even in its minutest details. Their membership could only be recruited from the outside world, as marriage and all intercourse with women were strictly prohibited. They are said to have been the first society in the world to condemn slavery in both theory and practice; they chose their own priests and public officers, even to their judges. Though the prevailing tendency of their life and thought was practical, and the tenets of their society were kept a profound secret, it is known that they cultivated a kind of speculation, which accounts, perhaps, for their spiritual asceticism, but indicates a great deviation from the normal development of Judaism and a profound sympathy with Greek philosophy, as well as older oriental ideas.

It is not known with certainty how the Essenes succeeded in separating themselves locally from their fellow-countrymen. They seem to have had no cities exclusively to themselves, but some of them dwelt in all the principal cities of the country. Philo speaks of their avoiding towns, preferring to live in villages. They were a most industrious people, giving their attention principally to agriculture and the rearing of flocks, withdrawing from the crowded haunts of men and living the most simple, virtuous life. It is said they did not renounce marriage because they did not deny the validity of the institution, or the necessity of commerce between the sexes for the continuance of the human race, but because they

were convinced of the artfulness and fickleness of the opposite sex. They adopted children when very young, and brought them up in their own principles. They rejected pleasure of all kinds as sinful. They despised riches not less than pleasure; neither poverty nor wealth was observable among them. When persons joined them they were required to contribute all they had to the common fund. Every one in the receipt of wages was expected to hand over the same to the public custodians, whose business it was to look after the interests of all.

In matters of dress their asceticism was most pronounced. They regarded oil as a great defilement, and invariably washed it off if anointed against their will. They wore their garments and shoes without changing until completely worn to tatters. They dressed coarsely, and preferred white to other colors. Their daily routine was governed by the strictest rules. Before the rising of the sun they were to speak of nothing profane, but offered to the sun certain traditional forms of prayer, as if beseeching it to rise. After this morning service they engaged in their daily toil, working steadily till the fifth hour, when they assembled, and, girding on a garment of linen for the purpose, bathed in cold water. They next seated themselves quietly in the dining hall, where bread was set before them by the baker, and the cook brought each one a single dish of one kind of food. Grace was said by the priest before and after the meal. After dinner they resumed work till sunset. In the evening they had supper, in which all friends who were present joined. They lived very quietly, allowing little noise or confusion to mar the tranquillity of their intercourse. No one usurped an undue share of the conversation. Their quiet manner of life almost oppressed a stranger with a feeling of mysterious awe. This composure and quiet was due to their temperance in eating and drinking. They were obedient to the instructions of their officers and priests. In two directions only were the common members permitted to act without authority; these were helpfulness and mercy. The deserving poor and destitute were to receive instant relief; but no member could give anything to his relatives without consulting the heads of the society. The

officers were elected by the members. They had their special courts of justice, which were composed of not less than a hundred members, and their decisions, which were arrived at with extreme care, were irreversible. Oaths were strictly forbidden. Their word was even stronger than an oath. They were just and temperate in anger, the guardians of good faith, and the ministers of peace, obedient to their elders and to the majority.

The moral characteristics which they most earnestly cultivated and enjoined will best appear in their rules of initiation. There was a novitiate of three years, during which the intending member was tested as to his fitness for entering the society. If the results were satisfactory he was admitted, but before partaking of the common meal he was required to swear awful oaths that he would reverence the deity, do justice to men, hurt no man voluntarily or at the instance of another, hate the unjust, assist the just, and that he would render fidelity to all men, especially to the rulers of the society, as no one rules but by God. He also makes oath that should he himself come to rule over others, he would make no violent use of his power, and not outshine by superior display those set under him, to make it his aim to cherish the truth and unmask liars, to be pure from theft and unjust gain, to conceal nothing from his fellow-members, nor to divulge any of their affairs to other men, even at the risk of death, to transmit their doctrines unchanged, and to keep secret the books of the society and the names of the angels.

Within the limits of the society there were four grades, so distinct that if any one touched a member of an inferior grade he was required to cleanse himself by bathing in water. Members who were found to be guilty of serious crimes were expelled from the society, and could not be received again till reduced to the very last extremity of want or sickness. As the result of the ascetic training of the Essenes, and of their temperate diet, they lived to a great age, and were superior to pain and fear. During the Roman war they cheerfully underwent the most grievous tortures rather than break any of the principles of their faith; in fact, they had, in

many respects, reached the very highest moral elevation attained by the ancient world. They were just, humane, benevolent, and spiritually-minded. The sick and aged were the objects of especial care and regard. They condemned slavery not only as an injustice but as an impious violation of the natural brotherhood of man. Marriage was sparingly permitted to some of their numbers, but with the express view of propagating and preserving the race. These, in all other respects, conformed to the ascetic life of the main body of the society.

The tendency of their life was eminently practical. Philo says they rejected logic as unnecessary to the acquisition of virtue, and speculation on nature as too lofty for the human intellect. On the one hand they held tenaciously by the traditional Judaism. Blasphemy against their lawgiver was punished with death. The sacred books were preserved and read with great reverence, though not without an allegorical interpretation. The Sabbath was most scrupulously observed; but in many important points their deviation from the strait path of Judaic development was complete. They rejected animal sacrifice as well as marriage. The oil with which priests and kings were anointed they accounted unclean, and the condemnation of oaths and the community of goods were unmistakable innovations for which they found no warrant in the ancient Hebrew writings. Perhaps the most singular feature in their faith and practice was their reverence for the sun. As observed, no profane word was to be spoken before its rising, and certain forms of prayer were offered to it. They were not allowed to insult its rays by any unclean act, however natural. In their speculative hints respecting the soul and the future state is found an important deviation from Judaism and the explanation of their asceticism. They held that the body is mortal, and its substance transitory; that the soul is immortal, but, coming from the subtlest ether, is lured as by a sorcery of nature into the prison-house of the body. At death it is relieved from its bonds as from long slavery, and joyously soars aloft. To the souls of the good there is reserved a life beyond the ocean, and a country oppressed neither by rain, nor snow, nor heat, but refreshed by a gentle

west wind, blowing continually from the sea, but to the wicked a region of wintry darkness and of unceasing torment.

In these points the resemblance of Essenism to certain phases of Greek philosophy and to some of the earlier Greek myths is unmistakable. To all intensely earnest minds, in which the force of one great idea is not corrected by other tendencies, a spiritual asceticism is thought to be the natural complement of a theory according to which a vile body is the prison-house of an immortal soul. Josephus says the Essenes believed in fate; but in what sense, and what relation it bore to divine providence, is not fully apparent.

This line of thought here indicated, and the divergence from the nominal development of Judaism—the belief with regard to the doctrines of the soul and a future state—are found to bear a strong resemblance to the Zoroastrian, Pythagorean, and Platonic speculations. The question very naturally arises, How far was Essenism a product of the Hebrew mind? and how far did it imbibe the nature and influence of oriental and Grecian philosophy? For more than a century the Jews had come in close contact with the Grecians, and almost inevitably imbibed much of their thought and philosophical speculations, and through the same source they came in contact with the older oriental theories. The Jewish people were doubtless assimilative and imitative more than original and inventive. Their philosophy was borrowed from the Egyptians, the Grecians, and other orientals. This remark applies to Essenism as well as other beliefs, not omitting Christianity itself, which two centuries later very perceptibly appropriated and incorporated in its own system much of the Grecian philosophy of Pythagoras, Plato, and others.

EGYPT THE SOURCE OF ESSENISM.

The asceticism peculiar to the Essenes was known to have had an earlier home in India, Burmah, Thibet, and especially in Egypt. The Therapeuts of the latter country were, in many respects, like the Essenes, and are thought to be the source whence they came. Taylor says the Therapeutæ and

the Essenes are one and the same sect, the Therapeutæ, which is Greek, being nothing more than Essenes, which is of the same sense in Egyptian, and is, in fact, a translation of it, as, perhaps, surgeons, healers, curates, or the most vulgar sense of doctors, is the nearest possible plain English of Therapeutæ. The similarity of the sentiments of the Essenes, or Therapeutæ, to those of the church of Rome induced the learned Jesuit Nicolaus Serarius to seek for them an honorable origin. He contended, therefore, that they were Asiræans, and derived them from the Rechabites, described so circumstantially in the thirty-fifth chapter of Jeremiah. At the same time he asserted that the first Christian monks were Essenes. Both of these positions were denied by his opponents, Drusius and Scaliger; but in respect to the latter, says Michaelis, "certainly Serarius was in the right." "The Essenes," he adds, "were indeed a Jewish and not a Christian sect." It would indeed be awkward for a Christian divine to admit them to the honors of that name before "that religion which St. Augustine affirms was 'before in the world' began to be called Christian." The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch (Acts); but surely it was something more than the name that made them such. They were none the less what the name signified ere yet it was conferred on them; and the Essenes had everything but the name.

"It is evident," continues Michaelis, "from the above-mentioned Epistle of St. Paul, that to the great mortification of the apostle they insinuated themselves very early into the Christian church." "But is it not," replies Taylor, "in reason as likely that the Christians, who were certainly the last comers, should have insinuated themselves into the Therapeutan community?"

Eusebius made it clear that the monastic life was derived from the Essenes; and we are told, because many Christians adopted the manners of the Essenes, Epiphanius took the Essenes in general for Christians, and confounded them with the Nazarenes—a confusion to which the similarity of their name to that of the Nazarites of the Old Testament might in some measure contribute. But this confusion is found still worse confounded in the remarkable oversight of the passage

(Matt. ii, 23) which betrays that Jesus himself was believed to be one of this fraternity of monks. Montfaucon and Helyot have attempted to prove them Christians, but were confuted by Boubier. Lange contended that they were nothing more than circumcised Egyptians, but he was confuted by Henmann. (Marsh's *Michaelis*, vol. iv, p. 79-81.)

"It was in Egypt," says the great ecclesiastical historian Mosheim, "that the morose discipline of asceticism took its rise; and it is observable that that country has in all times, as it were, by an immutable law or disposition of nature, abounded with persons of a melancholy complexion, and produced, in proportion to its extent, more gloomy spirits than any other parts of the world. It was here that the Essenes dwelt principally, long before the coming of Christ" (Mosheim, vol. i, p. 196).

"It is not the first glance," says Taylor, "nor a cursory observance that will sufficiently admonish the reader of the immense historical wealth put into his hand by this stupendous admission, this surrender of the keystone of the mighty arch, this giving up of everything that can be pretended for the evidences of the Christian religion. This admission of the great ecclesiastical historian (than whom there is no greater) will serve us as the Pythagorean theorem—the great geometrical element of all subsequent science, of continual recurrence, of infinite application—ever to be borne in mind, always to be brought in proof, presenting the means of solving every difficulty and the clue for guiding us to every truth. 'Bind it about thy neck, write it upon the tablet of thy heart.' Everything of Christianity is of Egyptian origin."

The same author assures us that the first and greatest library in the world was at Alexandria in Egypt. The first of that most mischievous of all institutions—universities—was the University of Alexandria in Egypt, where lazy monks and wily fanatics first found the benefit of clubbing together, to keep the privileges and advantages of learning to themselves, and concocting holy mysteries and inspired legends, to be dealt out as the craft might need, for the perpetuation of ignorance and superstition, and consequently of the jugglers and Jesuits. "All the most valued manuscripts of the

Christian scriptures are *Codices Alexandrini*. The very first bishops of whom we have any account were bishops of Alexandria. Scarcely one of the more eminent Fathers of the Christian church is there who had not been educated and trained in the arts of priestly fraud in the University of Alexandria—that great sewer of the congregated feculencies of fanaticism.

“In those early times the professions of medicine and divinity were inseparable. We read of the divinity student studying medicine in the School or University of Alexandria, to which all persons resorted, who were afterward to practice in either way, on the weak in body or the weak in mind among their fellow-creatures. The Therapeuts, or Essenes, as their name signifies, were expressly professors of the art of healing—an art in those days necessarily conferring the most mystical sanctity of character on all who were endued with it, and the most convenient of all others for the purposes of imposture and wonderment. It was invariably considered to be attainable only by the especial gift of heaven, and no cure of any sort, or in any way effected, was ever ascribed to natural causes merely. Those who after due training in the ascetic discipline were sent out from the University of Alexandria to practice their divinely acquired art in the towns and villages were recognized as regular or canonical apostles; while those who had not obtained their credentials from the college, who set up for themselves, or who, after having left the college, ceased to recognize its appointment, were called false apostles, quacks, heretics, and empirics. And in several of the early apocryphal scriptures we find the titles *Apostolici* and *Apotactici* (apostolical and apotactical, i. e., of the monkish order of Apotactites, or Solitaires) perfectly synonymous. Eusebius emphatically calls the apotactical Therapeuts apostolical. ‘Philo,’ he says, ‘wrote also a treatise on the ‘Contemplative Life, or the Worshipers,’ from whence we have borrowed those things which we allege concerning the manner of life of those apostolical men’ (Eccl. Hist., lib. 2, c. 17, A). Indeed, Christ himself is represented describing his apostles as members of this solitary order of monks, and being one himself: ‘They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world’

(John xvii, 16). What then but monks? The seceders or dissenters (and of this class was St. Paul), upon finding the advantage of setting up in their trade upon their own independent foundation, pleaded their success in miracles of healing as evidence of their divine commission, and abundantly returned the revilings of the Therapeutan college.

“ Unaided by the lights of anatomy, and unfounded on any principles of rational science, recovery from disease could only be ascribed to supernatural powers. A fever was supposed to be a demon that had taken up his abode in the body of the unfortunate patient, and was to be expelled, not by any virtue of material causes, but by incantations, spells, and *leucomancy*, or white magic, as opposed to *necromancy*, or black magic, by which diseases and evils of all sorts were believed to be incurred. The *white magic* consisted of prayers, fastings, baptisms, sacraments, etc., which were believed to have the same power over good demons, and even over God himself, as the black magic had over the evil demons and their supreme head, the devil. The trembling patient was only entitled to expect his cure in proportion to his faith, to believe without understanding, and to surrender his fortune and life itself to the purposes of his physician, and to the business of imposing upon others the deceits that had been practiced upon himself. Even to this day the name retained by our sacred writings is derived from the belief of their magical influence, as a spell or charm of God to drive away diseases. The Irish peasantry still continue to tie passages of St. John's Spell, or St. John's God's-spell, to the horns of cows to make them give more milk; nor would any powers of rational argument shake their conviction of the efficacy of a bit of *the word*, tied around a colt's heels to prevent them from swelling.

“ It will become physicians of higher claims to science and rationality to triumph over the veterinary piety of the Bog of Allen, when their own forms of prescription shall no longer betray the wish to conceal from the patient the nature of the ingredients to which he is to trust his life, nor bear, as the first mark of the pen upon the paper, the mystical hieroglyphic of Jupiter, the talismanic *R*, under whose influence

the prescribed herbs were to be gathered, and from whose miraculous agency their operation was to be expected.

“The Therapeutæ of Egypt, from whom are descended the vagrant hordes of Jews and Gypsies, had well found by what arts mankind were to be cajoled; and as they boasted their acquaintance with the sanative qualities of herbs of all countries, so in their extensive peregrinations through all the then-known regions of the earth they had not failed to bring home and remodel to their own purposes those sacred spells of religious romances which they found had been successfully palmed on the credulity of remote nations. Hence the Indian Christna might have become the Therapeutan head of the order of spiritual physicians.

“No principle was held more sacred than that of the necessity of keeping the sacred writings from the knowledge of the people. Nothing could be safer from the danger of discovery than the substitution, with scarce a change of names, ‘of the incarnate deity of the Sanskrit romance,’ for the imaginary founder of the Therapeutan college. What had been said to have been done in India could be as well said to have been done in Palestine. The change of names and places and the mixing up of the various sketches of the Egyptian, Phœnician, Greek, and Roman mythology would constitute a sufficient disguise to evade the languid curiosity of infant skepticism. A knowledge within the acquisition only of a few, and which the strongest possible interest bound that few to hold inviolate, would soon pass entirely from the records of human memory. A long-continued habit of imposing upon others would in time subdue the minds of the imposters themselves and cause them to become at length the dupes of their own deception, to forget the temerity in which their first assertions had originated, to catch the infection of the prevailing credulity, and to believe their own lie. In such, the known and never-changing laws of nature and the invariable operation of natural causes, we find the solution of every difficulty and perplexity that remoteness of time might throw in the way of our judgment of past events. But when, to such an apparatus of rational probability, we are enabled to bring in the absolute ratification of unquestionable testimony—to show what was

in supposition more probable than anything else that could be supposed, was in fact that which absolutely took place—we have the highest degree of evidence of which history is capable. We can give no other definition of *historical truth itself*.

“The probability, then, that that sect of vagrant quack-doctors, the Therapeutæ, who were established in Egypt and its neighborhood many ages before the period assigned by later theologians as that of the birth of Christ, were the original fabricators of the writings contained in the New Testament, becomes *certainty*, on the basis of evidence, than which history hath nothing more certain, by the unguarded, but explicit, unwary, but most unqualified and positive statement of the historian Eusebius, that ‘those ancient Therapeutæ were Christians, and that their ancient writings were our gospels and epistles.’ [This most important passage of all ecclesiastical records is in the second book, the seventeenth chapter, and following pages of Eusebius’ history. The title of a whole chapter (the fourth of the first book) of this work is, **THAT THE RELIGION PUBLISHED BY JESUS CHRIST TO ALL NATIONS IS NEITHER NEW NOR STRANGE**.] The wonder with which Lardner quotes this astonishing confession of the great pillar of the pretended evidences of the Christian religion (Credibility, vol ii, 4to, p. 361) only shows how aware he was of the fatal inferences with which it teems.

“It is most essentially observable that the Essenes, or Therapeuts, in addition to their monopoly of the art of healing, professed themselves to be Eclectics. They held Plato in the highest esteem, though they made no scruple to join with his doctrines whatever they thought conformable to reason in the tenets and opinions of the other philosophers. The following is from Mosheim:

“‘These sages were of opinion that *true philosophy* [observe well the phrase ‘true philosophy;’ ‘our philosophy’ and the ‘true philosophy’ occur throughout the Fathers in a hundred passages for one, when ‘Christianity’ should have been the word], the greatest and most salutary gift of God to mortals, was scattered, in various portions, through all the different sects, and that it was, consequently, the duty of every wise man to gather it from the several corners where it lay dis-

persed, and to employ it, thus re-united, in destroying the dominion of impiety and vice.' The principal seat of this philosophy was at Alexandria, and "it manifestly appears," says Mosheim, "from the testimony of Philo the Jew, who was himself one of the sect, that this (Eclectic) philosophy (of this Essenian or Therapeutan sect) was in a flourishing state at Alexandria when our savior was upon earth" (Eccl. Hist. Cent. 1, p. 1).

"We have only to collate the admissions of the orthodox Lactantius that Christianity itself was the Eclectic philosophy, inasmuch as that 'if there had been any one to have collected the truth that was scattered and diffused among the various sects of philosophers and divines into one, and to have reduced it into a system, there would indeed be no difference between him and a Christian. To compare the various tenets and speculations of the different philosophers and religionists of antiquity with the strong and particular smatch of the Platonic philosophy which we actually see pervading the New Testament; and to add the weight in all reason and fairness due to the positive testimony of that unquestionably learned and intelligent Manichean Christian and bishop, Faustus, that 'it is an undoubted fact that the New Testament was not written by Christ himself, nor by his apostles, but a long while after their time by some unknown persons, who, lest they should not be credited when they wrote of affairs they were little acquainted with, affixed to their works the names of apostles, or of such as were supposed to have been their companions, and then said they were written according to them.'"

"To this important passage," continues Taylor, "of which I reserve the original text for my next occasion of quoting it, I here subjoin what the same high authority objects—if possibly with still increasing emphasis—against the arguments of St. Augustine: 'For many things have been inserted by your ancestors in the speeches of our Lord, which, though put forth under his name, agree not with his faith, especially since—as already it has been often proved by us—that these things were not written by Christ, nor his apostles, but a long while after their assumption, by I know not what sort of

half Jews, not even agreeing with themselves who made up their tale out of reports and opinions merely, and yet fathering the whole upon the names of the apostles of the Lord or on those who were supposed to follow the apostles. They mendaciously pretended that they had written their lies and conceits according to them" (Faustus' lib. 33, c. 3). To this emphatic and positive admission Taylor only adds: "The conclusion is irresistible."

EGYPTIAN ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY.

At the very best that can be ascertained as regards the origin of Christianity, there is a great deal of uncertainty connected with it. There may have been such a person as Jesus, who acted the part of a wandering reformer, who strolled about Galilee and expounded his views in the highways and byways to those who cared to listen to him. He may have belonged to the community of Essenes, and imbibed their peculiar notions. It may have been thought he was attempting to excite sedition and overthrow the government, and consequently he was condemned to death and executed. Such cases have been numerous in the world. History is full of them; but unfortunately in this case there is no confirmation that such a story is true. It may have been so, it may not have been so. Of this the world must ever remain in uncertainty and ignorance. If it was an actual occurrence, it was by no means strange or startling. If it was not an actual occurrence, it is also not strange. The myth, if so it may be termed, is so much like older myths and legends that it can be easily believed to be a mere copy—an old story re-dressed and given new names and new location. This has been done over and over again. The story of Jesus may also have been made up of the older story of Toldoth Jeshu, which has already been briefly told. It may be, too, that as Paul, who is generally admitted to have been a real character, but who, by his own confession, was favorable to "guile," deception, and even "lies," if what he deemed *the good* was thereby promoted, may have devised this system of religion by his own powers of invention, or he may have appropriated

the legends that were floating about in the country among ignorant people, and have formulated a system of religion upon them. Stranger things have many times taken place, and no supernatural power was necessary to accomplish it. Again, it may be quite possible that the whole story was borrowed from Egypt, together with many of the sacred writings called gospels and epistles of which the New Testament is composed, as claimed by the distinguished author last quoted. This is all quite within the bounds of possibility, and by no means very improbable. That the theory and proofs of this author—Dr. Taylor—may be more fully understood, some of his arguments and quotations will be given in this connection. In continuing his remarks in reference to the Therapeuts and Essenes on page 66 of the "Diegesis," he reads in this wise: "From the more general account of that remarkable sect of philosophical religionists, the Egyptian Therapeuts, which we have collected from the admissions of the most strenuous defenders of the evidences of the Christian religion, we pass into the more immediate sanctuary of the sect itself, to learn from the unquestionable authority of one who was a member of their community all that can now be known of what their scriptures, doctrines, discipline, and ecclesiastical polity were. On the threshold of this avenue we only pause to recapitulate for the reader's admonition the certainties of information already established, which carrying with him through the important discoveries to which we now approach he shall with the quicker apprehension discern, and with the easier method weigh and appreciate, the value of the further information to which now we tend.

"1. The Essenes, the Therapeuts, the Ascetics, the Monks, the Ecclesiastics, and the Eclectics are but different names for one and the self-same sect.

"2. The word Essene is nothing more than the Egyptian word for that of which Therapeut is the Greek, each of them signifying *healer*, or *doctor*, and designating the character of the sect as professing to be endued with the miraculous gift of healing, and more especially so with respect to the diseases of the mind.

"3. Their name of *Ascetics* indicated the severe discipline and exercise of self-mortification, long fastings, prayers, contemplations, and even making of 'themselves *eunuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake*,' as did Origen, Melito, and others, who derived their Christianity from the same school, and as Christ himself is represented to have recognized and approved their practice.

"4. Their name of *Monks* indicated their delight in solitude, their contemplative life, and their entire segregation and abstraction from the world; which Christ, in the gospel, is in like manner represented as describing as characteristic of the community of which he himself was a member.

"5. Their name of *Ecclesiastics* was of the same sense and indicated their being *called out*, elected, separated from the general fraternity of mankind and set apart to the more immediate service and honor of God.

"6. Their name of *Eclectics* indicated that their divine philosophy was a collection of all the diverging rays of truth which were scattered through the various systems of pagan and Jewish piety into one bright focus—that their religion was made up of 'whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report—if there were any virtue, and if there were any praise' (Phil. iv, 8), wherever found; alike indifferent whether it were derived from 'saint, from savage, or from sage—Jehovah, Jove, or Lord.'

"7. They had a flourishing university, or corporate body, established upon these principles at Alexandria, in Egypt, long before the period assigned to the birth of Christ.

"8. From this body they sent out missionaries, and had established colonies, auxiliary branches, and affiliated communities in various cities of Asia Minor; which colonies were in a flourishing condition *before* the preaching of St. Paul.

"9. Eusebius, from whom all our knowledge of ecclesiastical antiquity is derived, declares his opinion that 'the sacred writings used by this sect were none other than our gospels and the writings of the apostles; and that certain diegeses, after the manner of allegorical interpretations of the ancient prophets—these were their epistles' (Euseb. Eccl. History, lib. 2, c. 16).

"10. It is certain that the epistles and gospels, and the whole system of Christianity as conveyed to us upon the credit of the fathers, do at this day bear the character of being such an *Eclectic* epitome, or selection from all the forms of religion and philosophy then known in the world, as these Eclectic philosophers professed to have formed.

"11. It is certain that our three first gospels were not written by the persons whose names they bear, but are derived from an earlier draft of the evangelical story, which was entitled the *Diegesis*.

"With these lights in thy hand, enter, reader, on the stupendous vista that I unlock for thee by the best translation I could make, and better than any that I could find ready made, of the most important historical doctrine in the whole world, whichever be the second in importance."

Our author then makes a full quotation of the translation of Eusebius on the existence of the Therapeuts in Egypt, and their identity with Christians. The first paragraph is as follows: "St. Mark, the evangelist, is said first to have been sent into Egypt and to have preached there the same gospel which he afterward committed to writing. There he established the churches of Alexandria, and so great was the number of both men and women that became believers upon his first address, on account of the more philosophical and intense asceticism (which he both taught and practiced), that Philo has seen fit to write a history of their manner of living, their assemblies, their sacred feasts, and their whole course of life."

By the forty-six paragraphs he takes from Eusebius (more than want of space will allow us to introduce here), with considerable from Philo, who was a learned and virtuous member of the community, he proves that the Therapeuts renounced their property, divested themselves of revenues and estates, laid aside the anxieties of life, and led a solitary, contemplative existence. In connection with Philo's testimony touching the identity of the Therapeuts and Christians, this passage appears:

"And these things, it seems, are reported by a man who listened to the holy scriptures as they expounded them; and, in short, it is very likely that those scriptures of the ancients

of which he speaks were the gospels and the writings of the apostles, and that certain diegeses, as it seems, of the ancient prophets interpreted, such as the epistle of Paul to the Hebrews contains, and many others; these were the epistles."

Eusebius afterward says of what he had quoted from Philo: "These clear and indisputable remarks of Philo we consider to be spoken of men of our religion only; but if any one should yet be so hardened as to contradict these things, yet may he be moved from his incredulity, yielding to such cogent evidences as can be found with none, but only in the religion of Christians, according to the gospel. . . . What need is there to add to these things their meetings together and their residences—the men in one place and the women in another? And the exercises according to the custom this day continued among us, and which, especially upon the festival of our Savior's passion, we have been accustomed to observe in fastings, in watchings, and in studying the divine discourses? and which are kept to this day in the same manner *only among us*, as the same author hath shown most manifestly and delivered in his own writing; and especially relating the vigils of the great festival and the exercises in them, and their hymns, which are the very same as those used to be said among us."

Dr. Taylor follows with several chapters of corollaries, arguments, and quotations confirming the theory that the Christian faith and the gospels and epistles had their origin in Egypt. It must be confessed he makes a pretty strong case, and it is one of the several probable origins claimed for the Christian system. The fact that the first great Christian ecclesiastical historian, Eusebius, held that the Therapeuts, their doctrines, and their sacred writings, and those of the early Christian churches were identical, goes far toward establishing the claim as extremely well founded. The remarks referred to, however, are too voluminous to introduce here. To become familiar with them the reader is referred to Taylor's "Diegesis," page 74.

Probably the correct conclusion with regard to Christianity is that it is not exclusively taken from one source, but is rather a compendium of the religious teachings

which had previously prevailed in many countries—some from India, some from Persia, some from Babylonia, some from Phoenicia, some from Syria, some from Judea, but more, far more, from Egypt and Greece.

THE APOSTOLIO FATHERS.

It is next in order to take a brief view of the men who assisted in establishing the Christian system. The devotees of the church have fondly regarded the apostolic Fathers as a very superior and favored class of men who lived in the first Christian century, soon after the days of the apostles. They are therefore revered as saints, and far holier than ordinary men. We have, however, no reason to think them much better than the average of the human race who peopled the world before and after their time. Though they are supposed to have received the faith direct from the apostles, they necessarily had their passions and defects like other men, not free from design, duplicity, and hypocrisy. Distance in time, as well as in space, often lends enchantment to the view, which is soon dissipated when brought into close contact.

Claims are set up that there were over seventy of these mythical characters for whom have been claimed the honor of Apostolic Fathers, but it is found that the most of this number were nothing but myths. The majority, in fact, were imaginary persons, whose various actions and sufferings were creations of the brain—figures in the great romance with a small beginning. The historians of the first three Christian centuries took an excessive license in this direction, and to such an extent was this carried that scarcely an incident in all they said can be accepted in full confidence as being the solid truth.

The most candid and learned of Christian inquirers have admitted that antiquity is most deficient just exactly where it is most important; that there is absolutely nothing known of the church history in those times on which a rational man could place any reliance; and that the epoch when Christian truth first dawned upon the world is appropriately designated the Age of Fable.

The title of Apostolic Fathers is properly given only to the five individuals, St. Barnabas, St. Clement, St. Hermas, St. Ignatius, and St. Polycarp, of whom the three former have honorable mention in the New Testament. It is claimed for the two latter that they suffered martyrdom, and each is supposed to be the author of the respective epistles bearing his name, but which nevertheless have not been accepted as canonical by the dignitaries of the church. They have all been termed spurious or forgeries. "Had they, however," says Taylor, "been retained in the canon of sacred scripture we should have had folios of evidence in demonstration of their authenticity, and with all the demonstration (which all religionists appeal to whenever they can) of penalties, fines, imprisonments, and infinite persecution on all who had understanding and integrity to treat them with the contempt which everything of the kind merits."

ST. BARNABAS, BISHOP OF MILAN.—He is said to have bought his apostleship by selling the property he had in Cyprus and laying the price he obtained for it at the feet of the disciples, whereupon his name was changed from Joses to Barnabas. In the catalogue of Dorotheus it is said: "Barnabas was a minister of the word, together with Paul. He preached Christ first at Rome, and was afterward made bishop of Milan." It is also stated, upon unknown authority, that a rope was tied about his neck and he pulled to the stake and burnt. We have no account of any miracles he performed in his lifetime; but in after ages not a few miracles were ascribed to the efficacy of his dead body, which had the distinguished honor of giving a certificate to the genuineness of Matthew's gospel, which was found lying upon his breast, written in his own hand, when his body was dug up on the island of Cyprus in the year 489. At this time the current faith in marvels and the efficacy of relics and the bones of saints had come to be very active.

Dr. Lardner says: "Any one who reads the Epistle of Barnabas with but a small degree of attention will perceive in it many Pauline phrases and reasonings. To give the character of the author of it in one word, he resembles St. Paul, as his fellow-laborer, without copying him."

ST. CLEMENT, BISHOP OF ROME, A. D. 96, is usually styled Clemens Romanus, to distinguish him from the Clement of Alexandria, who lived a hundred years later. There is but one ancient writing in existence ascribed to Clement of Rome, though spurious epistles, almost without number, were ascribed to him. In the one work believed to be his he mentions the martyrdom of Peter and Paul, though no mention is made of it in the New Testament; still his book was refused a place in the canon. It must be stated, in connection, that Clement's mention of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul was exceedingly vague and unhistorical. It reads in this wise: "Peter, by unjust envy, underwent not one or two, but many sufferings, till at last, being martyred, he went to the place of glory that was due to him." "Paul, in like manner, at last suffered martyrdom by command of the governors, and departed out of the world and went unto his holy place, being become a most eminent pattern of patience unto all ages." Neither place nor time nor circumstance is specified, as a correct historical statement should contain. How vague to say, "By the command of the governors!" Such language applies as well to Napoleon Bonaparte or the Sultan at Constantinople as anybody else. It is doubtless all romance.

The only New Testament book quoted or mentioned by Clement was Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians. He said nothing about the four gospels, for the simple reason that he knew nothing about them. They were not yet in existence.

ST. HERMAS, BISHOP OF PHILIPOLIS, A. D. 100.—He is believed to have been a Gnostic. His work entitled "The Pastor or Shepherd" was, in the time of Eusebius, publicly read in the churches, and, in the judgment of Origen, was held to be divinely inspired, but still was not admitted into the canon. The amount of credibility due it may be judged from the confession made by the writer:

1. Moreover, the angel said unto me, Love the truth, and let all the speech be true which proceeds out of thy mouth, that the spirit which the Lord hath given to dwell in thy flesh may be found toward all men, and the Lord be glorified who hath given such a spirit unto thee.

2. Because God is true in all his words, and in him there is no lie.

3. They, therefore, that lie, deny the Lord, and become robbers of the Lord, not rendering to God what they received from him.

4. For they received the spirit free from lying; if, therefore, they make *that* a liar, they defile what was committed to them by the Lord, and become deceivers.

5. When I heard this I wept bitterly; and when the angel saw me weeping, he said unto me, Why weepest thou?

6. And I said, Because, sir, I doubt whether I can be saved.

7. He asked me wherefore.

8. I replied, Because, sir, I never spake a true word in my life, but always lived in dissimulation, and affirmed a lie for truth to all men, and no woman contradicted me, but all gave credit to my word.

This saint is said to have escaped martyrdom. Is it safe to conclude his lies saved him?

ST. POLYCARP, BISHOP OF SMYRNA, A. D. 108.—In all probability this saint was one of the many myths of the early Christian age. Dr. Middleton, in his preface to his Letter from Rome, page 59, correctly says: "It is a thing to be confessed and lamented by the gravest divines of the Roman Catholic communion that the names and worship of many pretended saints, who never had a real existence, had been fraudulently imposed upon the church." It is sad that such a statement is true, and that so great a religious system as Christianity should be founded upon the basest falsehoods and inventions. On the subject of the manufacture of saints something special will be said further along. The very improbable story told of this saint by his several biographers is that having lived in undisturbed tranquillity in his bishopric under a Nero and Domitian, he was dragged in the eighty-sixth year of his age to the cruel death of fire under the government of the moral, virtuous, and philosophical Antoninus, and under the magistracy of one Herod, not of course the one who caused the little children of Bethlehem to be so cruelly murdered, though had it been so claimed by Christian writers, it would have been no more untrue than much they have written. When he was fastened to the fatal stake, the sacred story runs: "Then came a voice from heaven, saying, Be of good cheer, Polycarp, and play the man." The proconsul demanded of him whether he was that Polycarp, beckoning that he should deny it, and adding, "Consider thine age—swear by the fortune of Cæsar; repent thee of what is past; say, 'Remove the wicked.'" But Poly-

carp exclaimed, "O Lord, remove these wicked," and after concluding a mystical prayer with the usual doxology at the end of a sermon, he was committed to the flames; but the flaming fire, framing itself after the form of a vault, or sail of a ship, refused to burn so good a man; upon which the tormentors were ordered to be fetched, to whom orders were given to lance the body of the suffering saint in the side with a spear, from which, when he had done his prayer, such a stream of blood issued from it as to entirely extinguish the flames. Dr. Taylor adds that the original story unquestionably ran, that upon the piercing of the martyr's breast a dove was seen to fly out of his body. The devil is said to have interfered and prevented the saint's body being found after he was dead lest marvelous works should be performed by his wonderful flesh, and that it should become an object of worship.

It is added that Polycarp suffered with twelve others, who came out of Philadelphia. But Dr. Taylor says, "The name of Polycarp, his bishopric, his martyrdom, are entirely unknown to rational or credible history."

ST. IGNATIUS, BISHOP OF ANTIOCH, A. D. 107.—This is another of the mythical saints respecting whom there is great uncertainty and doubt. The sacred story runs thus: After having during a long life faithfully served as bishop of Antioch in Syria, he was summoned by the Roman Emperor Trajan to appear at Rome to be fed to wild beasts. The journey was performed on foot, notwithstanding his great age. He was attended by soldiers, but was nevertheless often attacked by wild beasts on the way. He must have taken the journey very leisurely, for he is said to have written several epistles while thus on his way to execution, in one of which he said, "From Syria even to Rome I fight with wild beasts, by sea and by land, by night and by day; being bound amongst ten leopards, which is a band of soldiers; who, even when good is done to them, rendered evil." He was condemned to be cast to the wild beasts in the amphitheater at Rome in consequence of the fanatical excitement produced by an earthquake, which is said to have lasted seven days, by which the emperor came near losing his own life.

There are no less than three martyrologies of Ignatius, giving an account of his journey from Antioch to Rome, but they are all recognized as mere idle legends, the existence of which was not known till hundreds of years later. They were undoubtedly written by some of the ingenious, pious inventors of whom the church has had so many.

Fifteen epistles have been ascribed to Ignatius, but eight of them have been generally admitted to be forgeries, while the remaining seven are also in considerable doubt. Of the seven a portion were written in Greek, and as the saint was a Syrian it becomes a grave question how his epistles come to be written in Greek. Among the number in Greek were a longer and shorter. Both cannot be authentic, and Dr. Lardner doubts the genuineness of either, while other rigidly orthodox critics reject them altogether. It is almost impossible to conceive the possibility of an old man writing elaborate epistles on theological and doctrinal subjects while being conducted by soldiers to trial and execution. It is undoubtedly one of the big stories of which so many are in existence of the saints and martyrs of the church. The epistles were unquestionably written by some pious priest or monk who, in the name of Ignatius, was willing to add to the sacred literature of the system. One of the ridiculous stories related of this sainted martyr is that he, when a small child, was the identical child which Jesus took upon his knee and blessed, when he said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," etc. Credulous believers have easily believed this yarn, but sensible people never. The coincidence is altogether too remarkable, and the facilities for manufacturing holy stories quite as great.

Reaching Rome on the last day of the public spectacles, it is said he was hastily thrown to the wild beasts and devoured, "only the harder portions of his holy remains were left, which were conveyed to Antioch and wrapped in linen, as an inestimable treasure left to the holy church by the grace which was left in the martyr." It would naturally be supposed that portions of his body thus wrapped in linen and conveyed so far must, in a short time, become very offensive souvenirs of the ~~reverend~~ martyr's holiness. The only conclusion which

can be reached by an intelligent and unprejudiced mind, after a full consideration of the Ignatian literature, is that it is a tissue of fraud and imposture. Even if there were an original element of fact, it is so small and has been so completely overlaid by the greatest creations and interpolations that it is now impossible to discover it.

Dr. Taylor, after treating these five apostolic Fathers, who are regarded by the church as its greatest pillars and who were the chosen ones to transmit the priceless boon of the gospel from the apostles themselves to succeeding generations, uses this language: "Here ends the utmost extent of testimony to the facts of the Christian history to be derived from the apostolic Fathers—that is, from all who can be pretended to have written or lived at any time within a hundred years of the birth of Christ. It is not possible to produce so much as one single sentence or manner of expression from any one, friend or enemy, historian or divine, maintainer or impugner of the Christian doctrines, within the first century, the like of which we can conceive to have been used by any person who had been witness of the facts on which the doctrines are founded, or contemporary of those who had been witnesses, or who had believed that those facts had really happened, or had so much as heard that there were any persons on earth that had seriously asserted that they had happened. The language of these Fathers, who are accounted orthodox, to say nothing of what we may hereafter gather from heretical information, is everywhere the language of a religious fatuity, childish beyond all the names of childishness—foolish as folly itself. We should just as well find evidence and authentication to Magna Charter in the scriblings of an idiot on a wall, or make out the particulars of the Punic wars from the records of a baby-house, as discover a trace of testimony to fact in any documents of the Fathers of the first century. It remains only for those who, after an elapse of eighteen centuries, have molded or new-fangled to themselves a system which they would now have us consider as 'worthy of all acceptance' to show how that which had so little evidence at first could come to have more afterwards; or how what was never known nor spoken of but as a matter of imagination,

conceit, and faith in the first century, should come to have a right to be put on the score of historical evidence at any later period.

“The orthodox Fathers (as far as doctrine is concerned with orthodoxy) seem only to be distinguished from the heretics in that they occasionally use a strength of language in their descriptions of allegorical figments which might seem to approximate to the style of history, and might make what they only intended as emblems pass for actual circumstances. Yet against such an acceptation of such occasional overdrivings of the allegory, we have to consider that we are in possession, not only of the argument arising from the natural improbability of such allegorical exaggerations when mistaken for facts, and the total absence of all corroborative and coincident testimony which could by no possibility be conceived to be wanting if such facts had ever happened; but we have the concurrent, and it may be called the unanimous, consent of the whole body of Christian dissenters (that is, in the church term, *the heretics*), who from the very first, and all along, never ceased to maintain and teach that no such a person as Jesus Christ ever existed, and that all the evangelical statements of his miracles, actions, sufferings, birth, death, and resurrection were to be understood in a high and mystical sense, and not according to the letter, as facts that had ever happened, and this, too, confirmed by admissions of those who are called orthodox themselves in many positive passages, unabated by so much as a single sentence that can be produced from any one writer within the first hundred years; which is such as he would have written, or would have suited his character to write, had he believed that the gospel had been founded upon historical fact. And absolutely the only difference between paganism and Christianity—Christians themselves being judges—was the difference between the allegorical fictions in which the one or the other couched the same physical theorems, as is demonstrated, without need of further comment, by the juxtaposition of their respective texts:

JULIUS FIRMICUS,

In description of the pagan mysteries, quotes pagan priests.

But in those funerals and lamentations which are annually celebrated in honor of Osiris, their defenders wish to pretend a physical reason. They call the seeds of fruit Osiris; the earth, Isis; the natural heat, Typhon; and because the fruits are ripened by the natural heat, are collected for the life of man, and are separated from their matrimony to the earth, and are sown again when winter approaches, this they would have to be the death of Osiris; but when the fruits, by the genial fostering of the earth, begin again to be generated by a new procreation, this is the finding of Osiris. (*De Errore Profanarum Religionum*, p. 6.)

BEAUSOBRE,

In description of the Christian mysteries, quotes Christian Fathers.

In one word, the suffering Jesus is nothing else than what the Manichæans called the members of God—that is to say, the celestial substance, or the souls which have descended from heaven.

The earth is the virgin; the heavenly substance which is in the earth is the substance of the virgin, of which Jesus Christ was formed; the Holy Ghost is the natural heat, by whose virtue the earth conceived him, and he becomes an infant in being made to pass through the plants, and from thence again into heaven. (*Beausobre Histoire des Dogmes de Manichee*, liv. 8, c. 4, tom. 2, p. 556.)

THE FATHERS OF THE SECOND CENTURY.

PAPIAS, BISHOP OF HIERAPOLIS, A. D. 116.—This is properly the first of the second century class of Christian Fathers. Cave placed him in the year 110. According to others he flourished in the year 115. Irenæus speaks of him as being a hearer of the apostle John, but it is doubtful if the claim is true, for Papias himself, in the preface to his five books entitled “An Explication of the Oracles of the Lord,” asserts nothing of the kind, which he would be very likely to have done had it been true. Eusebius says this of him: “Now, we are to observe how Papias, who lived at the same time, mentions a wonderful relation he had received from Philip’s daughters. For he relates that in his time a dead man was restored to life. He also relates another miracle of Justus, surnamed Barsabas, that he drank deadly poison, and by the grace of the Lord suffered no harm.” It is to be presumed that this “deadly poison” was not strychnine nor prussic acid, as the grace of the Lord is hardly sufficient to neutralize these.

Papias was not, it appears, a man of profound mental ability; Irenæus indicated as much, and Dr. Lardner also says

he was a man of small capacity. A fair estimate of the reliability of this primitive bishop may be formed from the following extract from him, which is handed down to us by Irenæus, in which he gravely assures us that he had immediately learned from the evangelist St. John himself that "the Lord taught and said that the days shall come in which vines shall spring up, each having ten thousand branches, and on each branch ten thousand arms, and on each arm ten thousand tendrils, and on each tendril ten thousand bunches, and on each bunch ten thousand grapes, and each grape, on being pressed, shall yield five and twenty gallons of wine; and when any one of the saints shall take hold of one of these bunches, another shall cry out, 'I am a better bunch; take me and bless the Lord by me.'" The same silly, childish metaphors of multiplication by ten thousand are continued with respect to grains of wheat, apples, fruits, flowers, and animals beyond all endurance, precisely after that famous *sortes* of the nursery upon the "House that Jack Built," the malt, the rat, the cat, the dog, the cow, etc; all which Jesus concluded by saying, "And these things are believable by all believers." But Judas, the traitor, not believing, asked him, "But how shall things that shall propagate thus be brought to an end by the Lord?" And the Lord answered him and said, "Those who live in those times shall see." In connection with this Taylor says: "But even this Christian conceit wants the merit of originality; it is a poor plagiarism from the form of adulation in which the sovereigns of India were wont to be addressed, which was as follows: 'May the king live for a thousand years, and the queen for a thousand years lie in his bed; and may each of those years consist of a thousand months, and each of those months a thousand days, and each of those days of a thousand hours, and each of those hours be a thousand years.'"

Notwithstanding the intimacy with St. John the evangelist which is claimed for Papias, and the value of the testimony he is said to bear for Matthew and Mark, he fell into the slight error of believing that no such event as the crucifixion ever happened, but that Jesus Christ lived to be a very old man, and died in peace in the bosom of his own family.

QUADRATUS, BISHOP OF ATHENS, A. D. 119.—It is on the testimony of this early Father that Christians largely depend to sustain their theory. For earliness in time and *apparent* distinctiveness of attestation, there are probably none who equal him. He is the first who said much about the reputed miracles of Jesus, and it is claimed for him that he was endued with the spirit of prophecy. The most marked portion of what is called his testimony is this: "The works of our Savior were always conspicuous, for they were real; both those that were healed and those who were raised from the dead, who were seen, not only when they were healed or raised, but for a long time and afterward, not only whilst he dwelled upon this earth, but also after his departure, and for a good while after it, insomuch that some of them have reached our times."

Eusebius himself admits that what Quadratus had to say was heresay evidence. He also expressed himself in this way: "Among those who were then famous *was* Quadratus, whom *they say*, together with the daughters of Philip, was endued with the gift of prophesying; and many others also at the same time flourished, who, obtaining the first step of apostolic succession, and preaching and sowing the celestial seed of the kingdom of heaven throughout the world, filled the barns of God with increase."

Dr. Taylor seriously doubts whether Quadratus was even a Christian. It was so common for the designing men of the church to manufacture saints from pagan sages and celebrities as well as impersonal myths that he relegates Quadratus to one of the two domains. He shows unmistakably that had Quadratus been a pagan worshiper at the shrine of Æsculapius, for instance, he could with strict propriety have used the language above quoted, which is thought to apply to Jesus. Dr. Taylor states what is a truth, that "God the Savior" was one of the titles applied to Æsculapius; that as savior and redeemer he was believed to raise people from the dead, or in other words to bring them from a condition so near to death that it might be termed raising from death itself. This pagan god was worshiped at Athens and other points in Greece under the designation, "Our Savior," and it was believed of

him that he performed numerous astonishing miracles. Tablets in his honor and praise were hung up in the temples devoted to him, and "the walls and pillars covered over and emblazoned with trophies of his victories over disease and death." It was common then, as now, to talk about persons being snatched from death and the grave who were cured of dangerous and deadly diseases; thus Æsculapius was held to have raised people from the dead, and all that Quadratus is held to have said of Jesus the Savior, he might just as well have said, or perhaps did say, of Æsculapius the Savior.

THE CHRISTIAN APOLOGISTS, or those who are said to have addressed apologies to the Roman emperors or Senate in defense of Christianity and of Christians were in order of time:

1. Quadratus, Bishop of Athens.....	A. D. 119.
2. Aristides, an Athenian philosopher.....	" 121.
3. Justin Martyr.....	" 140.
4. Melito, Bishop of Sardis.....	" 141.
5. Athenagoras.....	" 178.
6. Tertullian.....	" 200.
7. Minucius Felix.....	" 210.
8. Arnobius.....	" 306.

Of the writings of the first two nothing has been preserved; those of the others are more or less imperfect.

ARISTIDES, A. D. 121, was a philosopher of the city of Athens, and claimed to be an earnest advocate of Christianity. Eusebius says of him, "He was a faithful man, zealous for our religion, and, like Quadratus, wrote an apology for it to Adrian, which is still preserved among many." But however much he may have written, those now living are none the better for it. Indeed there is little save what Eusebius says to tell us that the Christians had a defender named Aristides. The heathen of Greece had an able man bearing that cognomen, styled "Aristides the Just." It is barely possible that such Christian writers as Eusebius—whose statements were not as reliable as they should have been—may have changed him from a pagan saint to a Christian saint.

HEGESIPPUS (A. D. 130) lived under Adrian, and wrote of the siege of Jerusalem, as well, it is claimed, as the ecclesiastical history from the apostles down to his time. He is cred-

ited with writing five books of Memoirs of the Apostles, though they have been pronounced forgeries, and their authorship has been attributed to St. Ambrose, who claimed to be the translator. From the fifth is taken this description of James, the brother of Jesus: "This man was holy from his mother's womb. He drank neither wine nor strong drink; neither ate any creature wherein there was life. He was neither shaven nor anointed, nor ever used a bath. To him alone was it lawful to enter into the holy places. He used no woolen garments, but wore only fine linen; and he went alone into the temple. He was found on his knees supplicating for the remission of the sins of the people; so that his knees were overgrown with a callosity like those of a camel, from his continual kneeling in prayer to God, and supplication for the people, and from the excess of his righteousness was surnamed the Just, and Oblias, which signifies in Greek the bulwark of the people and righteousness."

It seems to have been the idea of "holiness" with those impracticable, eccentric fanatics, as it was with the old hermits of Hindostan, and also the Therapeuts and Essenes, to never wash themselves, to spend their time on their knees as wretchedly as possible, calling upon God to withdraw his anger from those who presumed to eat such food as they preferred. Most singular ideas of "holiness" have been entertained, but nowadays cleanliness and cheerfulness seem most compatible with that quality. If God is specially pleased with those who never bathe themselves and pass their time on their knees in groaning and howling, we have no means of knowing it. Those who are so fanatical as to spend their lives in that way certainly seem to be worthless members of society. Unfortunately, the facts about Hegesippus, and what he wrote, are not as well authenticated as might be desired.

JUSTIN MARTYR, A. D. 140.—He was born at Flavia Neapolis, a city of Samaria in Palestine, which fact, perhaps, accounts for the Jewish turn of thought which he evinced. Lardner says he first studied under a Stoic, then under a Peripatetic, then under a Pythagorean, and lastly under a Platonic philosopher, whose principles and doctrines he pre-

ferred before all others, until he became acquainted with the Christian system, which he embraced as the only safe and profitable philosophy.

He derived his name from the fact that he suffered martyrdom in his seventy-fourth year, and according to Fabricius in the year 163. This very fact shows that martyrdom was not so common among the early Christians as subsequent writers attempted to prove; otherwise he would not need to have been singled out and the name Martyr applied to him. Dr. Taylor, however, insists that he was not a martyr, but that having got into a lewd quarrel with a cynical philosopher, Crescens, the latter, upon some provocation, knocked Justin on the head, which caused his death; and from this circumstance the Christians claimed martyrdom for him. There is quite as much probability of this statement being true as that he really was a martyr.

It is claimed for Justin that he addressed an apology for the Christian religion to the emperor of Rome in this language:

"Unto the Autocrat Titus *Ælius* Adrianus; unto Antoninus Pius, most noble Cæsar and true philosopher, unto Lucius, son of the philosopher Cæsar and adopted of Pius, favorers of learning; and unto the sacred Senate, with all the people of Rome, on behalf of those persons who, among all sorts of men, are justly hailed and reproached, I, Justin, the son of Priscus Bacchius, of Flavia Neapolis of Palestine in Syria, as one of their number, do suppliant' with earnest prayers, present this my petition: You hold not the scales of justice even; for, instigated by headstrong passions, and driven on also by the invisible whips of evil demons, you take great care that we shall suffer, though you care not for what.

"For verily I must tell you that heretofore those impure spirits, under various apparitions, went in unto the daughters of men, and defiled boys, and dressed up such scenes of horror that such as entered not into the reason of things, but judged by appearance only, stood aghast at the spectres; and being shrunk up with fear and amazement, and never imagining them to be devils, called them gods, and invoked them by such titles as each devil was pleased to nickname himself by.

"If, then, we hold some opinions near of kin to the poets

and philosophers in greatest repute among you, why are we thus unjustly hated? For, in saying that all things were made in this beautiful order by God, what do we seem to say more than Plato? When we teach a general conflagration, what do we teach more than the Stoics? By opposing the worship of the works of men's hands we concur with Menander the comedian, and by declaring the *Logos*, the first begotten of God, our Master Jesus Christ, to be born of a virgin without any human mixture, and to be crucified and dead, and to have risen again, and ascended into heaven, we say no more in this than what you say of those whom you style the Sons of Jove.

"For you need not be told what a parcel of sons the writers most in vogue among you assign to Jove. There is Mercury, Jove's interpreter, in imitation of the *Logos*, in worship among you. There's Æsculapius, the physician, smitten by a bolt of thunder, and after that ascending into heaven. There's Bacchus, torn to pieces, and Hercules burnt to get rid of his pains. There's Pollux and Castor, the sons of Jove by Leda, and Perseus by Danæ, not to mention others. I would fain know why you always deify the departed emperors, and have a fellow at hand to make affidavit that he saw Cæsar mount to heaven from the funeral pile. As to the son of God, called Jesus, should we allow him to be nothing more than man? Yet the title of the 'Son of God' is very justifiable upon the account of his wisdom, considering you have your Mercury in worship under the title of 'the Word' and 'Messenger of God.'

"As to the objection of our Jesus being crucified, I say that suffering was common to all the forementioned sons of Jove, but only they suffered another kind of death. As to his being born of a virgin, you have your Perseus to balance that. As to his curing the lame and the paralytic, and such as were cripples from their birth, this is little more than what you say of your Æsculapius.

"But if the Christian profession must still meet with such bitter treatment, remember what I told you before, that the farthest you can go is to take away our lives. But the loss of his life will certainly be no ill bargain to us; but you indeed,

and all such wicked enemies without repentance, shall one day dearly pay for this persecution in fire everlasting. And as far as these things shall appear agreeable to truth, so far we would desire you to respect 'em accordingly; but if they seem trifling, despise them as trifles; however, don't proceed against the professors of them, who are people of the most inoffensive lives, as severely as against your professed enemies, for tell you I must that if you persist in this course of iniquity, you shall not escape the vengeance of God in the other world" (Reeve's Apologies, p. 10).

The foregoing document was undoubtedly written in the early Christian centuries, but that it was written by Justin is less certain, and that it was presented to the emperors, Titus and Antoninus Pius, is still less probable. Had it been so presented it was eminently unjust, for Antoninus, especially, was among the most just of men, and to charge him with holding the scales of justice uneven, and with being driven on by headstrong passions and evil demons, was as unjust as it was untrue. The talk about the devils and demons, about impure spirits, under various apparitions, going in unto the daughters of men, defiling boys, etc., the devils becoming gods, and all that, shows the errors and superstitions of the times, while the consigning of the unyielding emperors to the endless tortures of hell to satisfy the vengeance of God is eminently Christian in spirit and in language. It is quite possible that what is attributed to Justin might have been written by some later cunning priest or monk. It cannot be denied, however, by believer or unbeliever, that a correct description is given by the writer of the striking resemblance between the claims of paganism and Christianity, as regards the veneration entertained for gods and their sons, and as paganism is far the oldest, the conclusion is inevitable that Christianity has been the borrower.

MELITO, BISHOP OF SARDIS, A. D. 41.—Some think this the same as in Revelations is called the *Angel of the church of Sardis*. He is reported to have been a eunuch and of mild and amiable disposition. He wrote an apology to Emperor Marcus Antoninus, in which, after making an appeal for leniency for Christians, he uses these words:

"For the philosophy which we profess truly flourished aforetime among the barbarous nations; but having blossomed again (or been transplanted) in the great reign of thy ancestor Augustus, it proved to be above all things ominous of good fortune to thy kingdom. For from thence forth the Roman empire increased in glory, whose inheritor now you are, greatly beloved, indeed, by all your subjects; both you and your son will be continually prayed for. Retain, therefore, this religion which grew as your empire grew; which began with Augustus, which was revered by your ancestors before all other religions. Only Nero and Domitian, through the persuasion of certain envious and malicious persons, were disposed to bring our doctrine into hatred. But your godly ancestors corrected their blind ignorance, and rebuked oftentimes by their epistles the rash enterprises of those who were ill-affected toward us. And your own father wrote unto the municipal authorities in our behalf, that they should make no innovations, nor practice anything prejudicial to the Christians. And of yourself we are fully persuaded that we shall obtain the object of our humble petition, in that your opinion and sentence is correspondent unto that of your predecessors, yea, and even more gracious and far more religious."

Dr. Taylor truthfully remarks: "This document—and it is wholly indisputable—is absolutely fatal to all the pretended historical evidences of Christianity, as it demonstrates the facts:

"1. That it is not true that Christians, as such, had ever, at any time, been the objects of any extensive or notorious political persecutions.

"2. That it is not true that Christianity had any such origin as has been generally imagined for it.

"3. That it is not true that it made its first appearance at the time generally assigned, for it had flourished before that time.

"4. That it is not true that it originated in Judea, which was a province of the Roman empire, for it was an importation from some foreign countries which lay beyond the boundaries of that empire."

There is little or no historical basis for the alleged events of the first two Christian centuries, and the facts and truths—what there is of them—are hard to separate from the fables.

ST. IRENÆUS, BISHOP OF LYONS, A. D. 192.—There has been some discrepancy of opinion as to the exact period when this saint performed his earthly mission. It has been claimed that he was third in descent from the apostles, he being a disciple of Polycarp, who was a disciple of St. John; but that can hardly be so, inasmuch as he wrote pretty extensively to refute that which could hardly have had an early existence. It is probable he did not flourish till near the close of the second century.

Like all the rest of that noble army, Irenæus contrived to carry off the honors of martyrdom, but as the bloodthirsty pagans allowed him to live till in his ninety-third year, they cannot be accused of cutting him off in immature life.

Dr. Lardner says of him that "he was an excellent person." Photius called him the "divine Irenæus." The most correct account of him, however, may be found in Middleton's "Free Inquiry into the Miraculous Powers," etc., in which he is neither spared nor flattered. Dr. Taylor says of him; "We must not wonder then that Irenæus should have been in the habit of asserting as true, not only what he himself knew to be false, but, in the plenitude of that security of not being contradicted, and of being able to cloak himself up in the sanctity of affected contempt of all who were more honest and better informed (on which all other churchmen as well as he place their ultimate reliance), that he should put forth as truth what he knew was impossible to be so, and what every sensible man in the world must have known so too; that he should audaciously misread inscriptions on public monuments, and pretend authorities for the proof of the Christian religion, even in the teeth of thousands who both knew and saw that there was nothing of the sort in existence. Thus he pretended that there was a monument or image between two bridges on the river Tiber at Rome, bearing an inscription to *Simon the holy God*, which the devil had caused to be erected there to the honor of Simon Magus, whom they were to be persuaded by that sort of proof that their ancestors had worshiped, thence to infer a coincidence with the apostolic history."

Amid innumerable ridiculous stories, he tells us that John, who leaned on the breast of Jesus, was a priest, a martyr,

and a doctor of divinity, and wore a petalon (some part of the popish trumpery), which on such authority as this was to claim the sanction of apostolic institution. The distinctness and solemnity of his assurance that miracles were still in full vogue in the church in his day; that "they still possessed the power of raising the dead, as the Lord and his apostles did, through prayer; and that oftentimes the whole church of some certain place, by reason of some urgent cause, with fasting and chaste prayer, hath brought to pass that the departed spirit of the dead hath returned to the corpse, and the man was by the earnest prayers of the saints restored to life again. Such a man never expected that rational beings would believe him; no good cause would thank him for his advocacy.

PANTÆNUS, A. D. 193.—He appears to have been a disciple of the Stoics, and later became a Christian. The claim is set up in reference to him that he had met some of the apostles, but very little confidence can be placed in the statement. It is one of the improbable, unauthenticated statements with which early Christian literature abounded. St. Jerome wrote of this ancient Christian as follows: "Pantænus, a philosopher of the Stoic sect, according to an ancient custom of the city of Alexandria, was, at the request of ambassadors from India, sent into that country by Demetrius, bishop of Alexandria, where he found that Bartholomew, one of the twelve apostles, had preached the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to the gospel of Matthew, which he brought back with him to Alexandria, written in Hebrew letters" (St. Jerome, quoted by Lardner, Vol. 1, p. 391). Dr. Taylor says in continuation: "Here we have another clue to the real history of Christianity, winding up to the same core of the labyrinth and bringing us through a varied tract to the result which we have already ascertained, under the guidance of Melito, Eusebius, and Philo. Pantænus, a missionary from the Therapeutan College of Alexandria, seems to have brought from India the idolatrous legends of the Hindoo god Christna, whom he imported into the Roman dominions, like a good Eclectic as he was, uniting the characters of the Grecian or Phœnician Yesus and the Indian Christna, in *'one Lord Jesus*

Christ, whose history, at first contained in the diegesis, or general narrative, was re-edited by three Egyptian secretaries, afterward yclept the evangelists, Matthew, Mark, and Luke, and subsequently enlarged by an appendix of Egyptian rhapsodies under the denomination of the Gospel according to St. John. The discovery of the unknown term in quadratic equation never more entirely responded to all the requisites of the problem than these facts do to every rational query that can arise out of the phenomena of the gospel legend" (Diegesis, p. 324).

ST. CLEMENT, OF ALEXANDRIA, A. D. 194.—He was originally a heathen, and after embraced Christianity. He was an extensive writer, and of high authority in the church. He succeeded Pantænus as president of the monkish university at Alexandria, which Taylor thinks the world has to thank for the concoction or getting up of the whole gospel scheme—originally imported from India and modified to the taste of the nations which acknowledged the supremacy of Rome.

TERTULLIAN, A. D. 200—the last of the second century Fathers and the first of the Latin Fathers. He was a convert from paganism, and became a very zealous propagandist of the new faith, but finally fell into heresy. He was made presbyter of the church of Carthage, in Africa, of which he was a native, about the year 193, and died, as is thought, about 220. The estimates made of his ability as a writer and of his character as a man vary with the different judges. Lactantius styled him rugged, unpolished, and very obscure; Cave estimated him as lofty, masculine, and carrying a majestic eloquence with him; Lardner thought that in his writings appeared frequent tokens of true, unaffected humility and modesty. It will hardly interest the reader sufficiently to introduce his style of composition here, but perhaps it will be admissible to give some quotations from him, giving due credit to the Roman emperors, thus:

"The Christian persecutors have been always men divested of justice, piety, and common shame, upon whose government you yourselves have put a brand and rescinded their acts by restoring those whom they condemned. But of all the emperors down to this present reign, who understood anything of religion

or humanity, name we one who ever persecuted the Christians. On the contrary, we show you the excellent M. Aurelius for our protector and patron, who, though he could not publicly set aside the penal laws, yet he did as well; he publicly rendered them ineffectual in another way, by discouraging our accusers with the last punishments, viz., burning alive.

“Does not the prison sweat with your heathen criminals continually? Do not the mines continually groan with the load of heathens? Are not your wild beasts fattened with heathens? Now, among all these malefactors, there is not a Christian to be found for any crime but that of his name, or if there be, we disown him for a Christian.”

By his falling into heretical notions, he, perhaps, escaped martyrdom. His name is not numbered with those who laid down their lives in consequence of their opinions.

THE FATHERS OF THE THIRD CENTURY.

ORIGEN, A. D. 230.—This perhaps is the most distinguished priest of the church. He was born in that great cradle and nursery of all superstition, Egypt, in 184 or 185. Eusebius denies the assertion of Porphyry, that Origen had been a heathen and was afterward converted to Christianity; yet Origen was proud to vindicate to himself his imitation of his predecessor Pantænus, in the study of profane learning. He had studied under that celebrated philosopher, Ammonius Saccus, who in the second century had taught that “Christianity and paganism, when rightly understood, differed in no essential points, but had a common origin, and really were one and the same religion—nothing but the schismatical trickery of fanatical adventurers, who sought to bring over the trade and profits of spiritualizing into their own hands, having introduced a distinction where in reality there was no difference.” By this it is seen what was orthodox doctrine of the second century; some changes have taken place since that time.

Leonides, the father of Origen, is said to have suffered martyrdom, and it is alleged that the youthful Origen encouraged him thereto, which is so unnatural as to be improbable. Another report of Origen is more true. To comply with the

instructions of Jesus in Matt. xix, 12, he made a eunuch of himself for the kingdom of heaven's sake. This rash act saved him from the danger of falling into the temptations and vices which have been the ruin of so many, believers and otherwise.

He was a great scholar, and wrote large numbers of books. It has been claimed for him that he wrote six thousand volumes, but that is too great a number to be credible, unless they were of very small size. It is said he employed seven amanuenses, with an equal number of transcribers, besides young girls skilled in calligraphy, who also made copies of his works. The most critical of his works is the Hexapla, or six-columned Bible, an attempt to provide a revised text of the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament. On this undertaking he is said to have spent twenty-eight years. His notable work is his reply to Celsus. It was elaborate enough, but he did not fairly and clearly answer the great unbeliever. He showed too much fondness for applying harsh and unbecoming epithets upon the man of whom he knew little or nothing. These are among the unjust and ungentlemanly expressions and aspersions with which he fondly interspread his eight books of reply to Celsus: "Childish assertions," "Exceedingly weak in his assertions," "Extremely foolish also in his remark," "Superficial as to his objection." "Manifest falsehood," "Indescribable silliness," "the charge of falsehood," "Foolish assertions," "this low jester, Celsus," and more in the same line. Perhaps he resorted to such language as this in place of better arguments not at hand; but probably never was the fact better illustrated that hard words and unhandsome epithets will not take the place of sound arguments, and that they will not demolish reason and truth. The effort of Origen to overthrow what Celsus had written was not successful. It has justly been censured as weak and superficial.

Origen was probably the first author who gave a distinct catalogue of the books of the New Testament, and it is believed that he did more toward establishing the canon than any other man. His opinion went far with the Council of Laodicea in 363, which was the first council that attempted

to fully settle the canon. His list of books was accepted, and the books pronounced written by inspiration. Though the Council of Carthage, in 397, modified the work of the previous council, subsequent decisions mainly reaffirmed the first selection, and Origen's list is practically the present canon.

Taylor says of him : " His writings contain the finest and adroitest specimens of *under-throwing* that could be well adduced ; they are a sort of looking-glass in which either wise or simple will be sure to see the face he likes best. The all-adoring and all-digesting believer may read his six thousand volumes and never be startled out of the brown study of Christian orthodoxy ; the reader who hath once learned to snuff his candle as he reads will ever and anon perceive that Origen never played the fool but once. His character needs only the apology which human nature claims for every man—*his situation*. He was in every sense of the word a master spirit—a civilized being among the wild men of the woods. There is no occasion, however, to act on Dr. Lardner's avowed principle of concealing facts to promote piety. It is not to be denied that this wisest, greatest, best man that ever bore the Christian name relapsed at last into paganism—publicly denied his Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, and did sacrifice unto idols. I find that Eusebius, as well as Lardner, has omitted all mention of this grand and glorious fact ; and but for the avowed intention of Dr. Lardner to promote true piety I should have considered his not finding it in Eusebius an excuse for the omission. It is to be found, however, in Origen's own writings, and is confirmed in his life in the Greek of Suidas. His dolorous lamentation and repentance after this outrageous apostasy presents us with the most authentic, and at the same time most demonstrative, view of the interior character of the most primitive Christianity, and must satisfy those who dream of a state of Christianity at any time before the Protestant Reformation, when what are called the principles of the Reformation were the principles of Christianity, how grossly their Protestant teachers have deceived them " (Diegesis, pp. 331, 332).

Taylor then follows with somewhat copious extracts from Origen's dolorous lamentations, describing in pitiful language

the unhappy state of mind he was in, and in which he calls himself "silly wretch," "inheritor of the kingdom of the devil," "wallowing in impiety," and uses language like this: "O my lost priesthood! O my dishonored ministry! O all ye my friends, in that I have now trodden under foot the seal and cognizance of my profession, and joined league with the devil! Pity me, O ye, my friends, in that I am rejected and cast away from the face of God. It is for my lewd life that I am thus polluted. Alas, how am I thus come to nought! There is no sorrow comparable unto my sorrow; there is no affliction that exceedeth my affliction; there is no lamentation more lamentable than mine; neither is there any sin greater than my sin; and there is no salve for me." It indeed seems a great pity that such a light in the church should find his religion of so little real use to him, and that he should find it necessary to suffer, after many years of faithful service, such terrible throes of conscience and such poignant regret for his misdeeds.

ST. GREGORY, BISHOP OF NEOCÆSAREA, A. D. 243.— This man was also called "Thaumaturgus," or the Wonder Worker from the great number of miracles he is said to have performed. His parents were Gentiles, but he early became a pupil of Origen. He must have been a clever youth, for when Origen first saw him he liked him much, and advised him to give his attention to the study of philosophy as a foundation for true religion and piety. With Origen he studied logic, physics, geometry, astronomy, and ethics. He was doubtless a person of considerable ability, but he must nevertheless have been a charlatan and fraud, in view of the impossible deeds he claimed to perform. The first miracle claimed for him was throwing into the most severe fits a woman who attempted to injure him by circulating disreputable and impudent reports about him. It seems he put a very wicked devil into her, and the demon would not leave the woman until Thaumaturgus interceded with God and made the special request that the devil might vacate the premises, which request God complied with, which by the bye showed not a little condescension on the part of God for Thaumaturgus, who

was still a heathen and had not yet embraced the religion of Jesus.

His ordination to the Christian ministry seems even to have taken place before he was converted to its doctrines. Phedimus, bishop of Amasea, knowing the ability of the young man, and grieving that he should lead a useless life in the world, desired to consecrate him to God and the church. But Gregory was shy of such a charge, and industriously concealed himself from the bishop, of whose design he was aware. Phedimus, at length becoming tired in his fruitless attempts to meet Gregory, and being blessed, of course, with the gift of foreknowledge, consecrated him to God though bodily absent, assigning him also a city which had been so addicted to idolatry that up to that time there were only seventeen believers in all the vicinity, and this was three days' journey away. Gregory, however, required but a short time to prepare himself for the sacred duty assigned him.

While in deep and devout meditation he had a magnificent vision in his chamber. The Virgin Mary very kindly paid him a visit—as her son had previously to Paul—accompanied by St. John the apostle, encompassed in a bright light, too strong for Gregory to look upon. The Virgin and St. John engaged in conversation on the very subjects upon which Gregory wished information, and soon the Virgin told St. John to give information to the young man in the “mystery of piety.” This the evangelist complied with, and when they had taken their departure Gregory wrote it down.

Middleton, in his “Free Inquiry,” narrates a stupendous miracle which the young man then performed. When Gregory was on his way to take possession of the city to which he was assigned, a fearful storm coming up he was forced to take shelter at night in a heathen temple. In consequence of this, when the priest came in the morning to perform his usual rites, a demon had the insolence to tell him that since so worthy a saint had lodged there the priest could no longer perform service there. This the priest angrily objected to, as a matter of course, and he pursued Gregory, and threatened to complain to the magistrates against him unless he made matters pleasant again with the devil. This aroused Gregory's

fears and he simply took a piece of paper and wrote there upon these words, "*Gregory to Satan: Enter!*" This paper being laid upon the altar, and the customary pagan rites performed, the devil appeared as usual, which so confirmed the priest of the remarkable power possessed by Gregory that he became converted to the religion of Jesus, and was one of Gregory's deacons. On many occasions Gregory showed that he possessed special powers over devils, and could make them perform about as he pleased. In connection with the devil miracles just related, Gregory caused a large, heavy stone to rise in the air before the priest and settle where Gregory indicated.

At another time two brothers were at variance about the possession of a certain lake, and their quarrel was so bitter that Gregory found it impossible to reconcile them. When they were about to settle the quarrel by a duel, Gregory, by prayer, caused the lake to be entirely dried up, so there was no water left to quarrel about. At another time, by his mystical power, he prevented the river Sycus from overflowing, and worked such a charm over it that it never attempted afterward. He cast out many devils by sending to those afflicted with devils a piece of linen, merely, upon which he had breathed. The incredulous may not find it easy to believe these remarkable stories, but Thaumaturgus was so pious and so talented that the true believer can easily accept all that is claimed for him. Faith, it will be remembered, is the most valuable virtue in the Christian category.

ST. CYPRIAN, BISHOP OF CARTHAGE, A. D. 248.—This man was an African by birth, and spent the most of his life in heathenism. He embraced Christianity in 246, and in 258 he suffered martyrdom, so he was a Christian but twelve years, but he did more in that comparatively short time than many Christians have performed in a whole lifetime. In the first place, when converted, he sold an estate he possessed and gave the money to the poor, but by some *favorable providence* the property came back into his possession again, and he was none the poorer for his generosity. St. Jerome says: "It is needless to give a catalogue of his works; they are brighter than the sun." They must have been kept thickly covered,

or the extreme light must have destroyed the sight of those in the immediate vicinity.

His martyrdom is said to have been brought about by his haughty and insolent manner, and his insubordination to the Carthage authorities. He had been twice banished; but that did not seem to cure him of his turbulence and persistence in holding councils and general assemblies; so at length a decree went forth that he must be put to death. He was beheaded.

FATHERS OF THE FOURTH CENTURY.

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT, A. D. 306.—This sketch is taken from the "Champions of the Church," and is from the pen of S. H. Preston :

Flavius Valerius Aurelius, better known in history as Constantine the Great, the first Christian emperor of Rome, was born at Naissus, in Dacia, A. D. 272. His father was the Emperor Constantius Chlorus; and his mother, Helena, according to some authorities, was the daughter of a British king, while other traditions represent her as having been the daughter of an innkeeper. When he was eighteen years of age his father was elevated to the rank of Cæsar. This fortunate event was followed by the divorce of Helena—Constantius, after his promotion, having sought the splendor of an imperial alliance. Constantine shared the disgrace and humiliation of his mother. Entering the service of Diocletian, who had abdicated the imperial dignity, he soon signalized his valor in the wars of Persia and Egypt, and ere long rose to the rank of a tribune of the first order.

Although early distinguished by the profession of arms, he showed but little inclination for study and the improvement of his mind. In person he was tall and majestic; he is described as dextrous in all the military exercises, intrepid in battle, and affable in peace. Cold and insensible to the allurements of pleasure, his whole conduct was tempered by prudence, and his mind entirely engrossed by ambition. His talents, courage, and martial services rendered him a favorite of the army and an object of jealousy to Galerius, the

emperor who shared with his father the administration of Rome.

Apprehending the sure and secret revenge of his imperial foe, young Constantine left the palace of Nicodemia in the night and traveled with such incredible diligence through Bithynia, Thrace, Dacia, Pannonia, Italy, and Gaul as to frustrate any attempt Galerius might make to overtake him. Amidst the joyful acclamations of the people he safely reached the port of Boulogne, and joined his father at the very moment he was preparing to embark for Britain. The result of the British expedition was a victory over the barbarians of Caledonia. This closed the military career of Constantius. Fifteen months after he had received the title of Augustus, and fourteen years after he had been promoted to the rank of Cæsar, he ended his life in the imperial palace of York.

The soldiers who had followed Constantine into Britain showed their esteem for their beloved emperor by immediately saluting his son with the titles with which he had been invested. The throne had ever been the object of Constantine's ambition, and now it was his only means of safety. He was sufficiently acquainted with the character of Galerius to know that if he would live he must determine to reign. Receiving the acclamations of the flower of the western armies which had followed his father to Britain, he justified himself in usurping the imperial purple without so much as soliciting it in the regular and constitutional manner.

By his second wife, Theodora, Constantius had six children, three of either sex. These children of royal extraction claimed a preference over the son of the divorced Helena to the succession of their father. At this time Constantine was in the thirty-second year of his age, in the full vigor of both body and mind, while the eldest of his brothers was not more than thirteen years old.

Soon after the death of Constantius Rome became divided into hostile powers, and became the theatre of revolt and war. At one time, and the only time in its history, six emperors ruled its vast territory.

Constantine formed an alliance with Maximian, one of the

most powerful contestants for the throne, by the marriage of his daughter Fausta. The nuptials were celebrated at Arles, in France, with every circumstance of magnificence. After abdicating the imperial purple the second time, Maximian at last sought refuge in the court of Constantine; but when an incursion of the Franks had summoned the latter with a part of his army to the banks of the Rhine, the crafty Maximian spread a report of the death of his son-in-law, seized the treasure, and ascended the throne. Upon the first news of the perfidy of his father-in-law Constantine returned by such rapid marches to the gates of Arles as left Maximian no time for the establishment of his authority, or even for resistance. He was obliged to withdraw to the neighboring city of Marseilles. Without delay Constantine immediately assaulted the city. The garrison purchased their pardon by delivering up the city and the person of Maximian, against whom sentence of death was pronounced, and who was allowed the favor of strangling himself with his own hands. Had Constantine possessed the humanity to have spared this old man, who had twice been emperor of Rome, who had been the benefactor of his father, and who was the father of his wife, he would have been more justly deserving of the title "Great." Notwithstanding the murder of Maximian and the slaughter of the barbarous Franks and Alemanni, whose captured kings he caused to be thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheater of Treves for his diversion, the reign of Constantine in Gaul seems to have been the most innocent and virtuous period of his life. It will thus be seen at the outset that the virtues of this first of Christian emperors were not such as to render him illustrious.

At length the deaths of Maximian and Galerius reduced the number of emperors to four. At this period of its history Rome comprised all the possessions of the Grand Signor of the present day, except Arabia; all that the house of Austria possesses in Germany, and all the German provinces as far as the Elbe; Italy, France, Spain, England, and half of Scotland; all Africa as far as the Great Desert, and even the Canary Isles. Epirus, Macedonia, Thessaly, Illyria, Pannonia, Asia Minor, the African coasts, and countries which are at

present nearly barbarous and deserted, were then populous and well governed. It was the ambition of Constantine to confirm and enlarge the immense power of all these nations, and reduce them all to his single yoke.

It was while marching to Rome to fight Maxentius, one of the surviving rival emperors, that, according to that Christian falsifier Eusebius, Constantine was converted to Christianity by a miraculous vision. This was the appearance in the clouds of the grand imperial standard surmounted by a large Greek R, with a cross, and certain Greek words which signified, "By this sign thou shalt conquer." This is said to have happened in the year 312. It would have been more consistent had this vision appeared in Italy upon a day of battle, with the inscription in Latin instead of Greek. But of course only Infidels are allowed to discredit this pious narrative. Maxentius was defeated and killed near Rome.

At length only one rival remained, his brother-in-law, Licinus, emperor of the East, but gaining a complete victory over him at Adrianople, and having treacherously caused him to be put to death in violation of his imperial pledge of safety, Constantine was left the sole master of the Roman world. By the most treacherous, bloody, unscrupulous, and cruel course of conduct he had triumphed over all the rival claimants to the throne, and had at last obtained the object of his ambition. Murder, assassination, and wholesale slaughter had marked his career. He had attained undisputed supremacy over the great empire of Rome, both in the East and West. And now he wished to offer an expiation for his crimes. He applied to pagan priests and pontiffs. They told him that in their religion there was *no atonement* for such guilt as his; but they referred him to the then obscure sect of Christians, who undertook to guarantee complete absolution for the greatest enormities through the merits of the blood of an innocent victim. And so Constantine made an open profession of Christianity, but without becoming strictly a Christian himself, for at that time baptism was essential to any person's becoming one; and Constantine, probably with the hope that he might continue committing every act with impunity, delayed the act of immersion till near the point of

death. By thus waiting till near the approach of death he doubtless expected, according to Christian teaching, to expiate at once in the water of regeneration the guilt and bloodshed of a lifetime. Oh, the most unfortunate event that ever befel the human race was the adoption of Christianity by this crimson-handed cut-throat in the possession of uncontrolled power!

The first legal enactment for the observance of the first day of the week, commonly called Sunday, was made by him. The edict was given A. D. 321, and was worded as follows: "Let all judges and people of the towns (or cities) rest, and all the various trades be suspended, on the venerable day of the sun (*venerabile die Solis*). Those who live in the country, however, may freely and without fault tend to the cultivation of their fields (since it often happens that no other day be so suitable for sowing grain and planting the vine), lest, with the loss of favorable opportunity, the commodities offered by Divine Providence should be destroyed."

And as he must be master in everything, so he must be master in the church. Accordingly, in 325, he convoked and opened the celebrated Council of Nice, the first general council in ecclesiastical history. He had murdered his father-in-law, and cut the throat of his twelve-year-old nephew; and the very year that he convened the first great Christian council, he beheaded his eldest son, Crispus, and suffocated in a bath of boiling water his wife, Fausta. In the words of an old Gallic author, "He loved to make a clean house." And after having caused seven members of his family to be put to death in cold blood, after having steeped his soul in the guilt of every crime, from private assassination to wholesale massacre, he called together the Christian world at Nicea; and with the diadem upon his brow, covered over with jewels, seated on high in a golden chair, the first Christian emperor proceeded to settle the orthodox creed and determine the will of God for the centuries to come. In answer to the call of Constantine, two thousand and forty-eight bishops, all of different sentiments and opinions, met at the town of Nicea, in Bithynia. The main object of this council was to decide the dispute between

Athanasius, deacon of Alexandria, and Arius, an Eastern schismatic, viz., whether Jesus Christ was God or creature, and to settle the canon of Scripture. Of course this meeting of two thousand violent and exasperated bishops, each intensely interested in having his own peculiar opinions prevail, resulted in a general quarrel; and to restore harmony, Constantine, as moderator, expelled seventeen hundred and thirty of the delegates, thus leaving only three hundred and eighteen to settle the vexed question whether God the Son was the same as God the Father, as well as what writings were the word of God. "This was done," says Pappius, "by placing all the books under a communion table, and, upon the prayers of the council, the inspired books jumped upon the table, while the false ones remained under." But after a time, this seems to have proved a failure; the majority began to mock at the method, and the holy wrangling was renewed fiercer than before. They were then submitted to *vote*, each manuscript being subjected to two ballots: 1. Whether genuine, or written by the person whose name it bore; 2. Whether authentic—that is, whether its subject-matter was true.

Out of fifty gospels submitted, only four—viz., Matthew Mark, Luke, and John—were admitted, and those by varying votes. Luke passed by only one majority vote. Had one more voter been kicked out of the Council the Christian world would have been minus an inspired book.

Subsequent councils received as canonical books rejected at Nice. One council would restore a book thrown out in a previous one. "Thus," says a writer, "were the 'sacred writings'—the 'word of God'—tossed like a battledoor from sect to sect, and altered as the spirit of faction might dictate." As illustrating the spirit that actuated the "ordained heads" at these councils, the following is quoted from Tindal, the great Christian writer: "Indeed, the confusion and disorder were so great among them (the bishops), especially in their synods, that it sometimes came to blows; as, for instance, Dioscorus, bishop of Alexandria, cuffed and kicked Flavianus, patriarch of Constantinople, with that fury that, within three days after, he died." And speaking of their doctrinal

consistency, he says : " For though they were most obstinate as to power, they were most flexible in regard to faith, and in their council complimented the emperor with whatsoever creeds they had a mind to, and never scrupled to recant what they had before enacted, or re-enact what they had before recanted."

From the fact that from the council of Nice (325) to the end of that century there were thirty-eight councils called to settle the matter of controversy between Arius and Athanasius, and that nineteen of said councils decided in favor of the doctrines of the former, and nineteen—precisely the same number—that declared in favor of the doctrines of the latter, the inference is that the authority of the Fathers, after all, was not final in the establishment of the true faith.

The Nicene council ratified the creed of Athanasius and condemned that of Arius. Constantine gave his imperial sanction to this decision, and set the seal of the empire upon the books there declared by ballot to be the " word of God."

He also issued an edict declaring that those who resisted the divine judgment of the synod must prepare themselves for an immediate exile. Eusebius of Nicodemia, for his wavering assent, was disgraced and exiled. The impious Arius was banished into one of the remote provinces of Illyricum. His person and disciples were branded by law with odious names; his writings were condemned to the flames, and capital punishment was denounced against those in whose possession they should be found.

The emperor had now imbibed the genuine Christian spirit, which has been ever one of persecution and intolerance; and the angry, sarcastic style of his edicts was designed to inspire his subjects with the hatred which he had conceived against the enemies of Jesus Christ. But notwithstanding his zeal for the propagation of the new religion, it does not appear that he attempted any penance or expiation for his unparalleled crimes and cruelties. It was at Rome that he had exercised his most savage enormities.

In the jurisprudence of Rome the person of a citizen had always been considered sacred from the application of the torture. Through all the annals of tyranny, from the reign

of Tiberius to that of the first Christian emperor, the last hours of a Roman citizen were secured from the danger of ignominious torture. But during the reign of Constantine there was no privileged exemption from the torments of the dreaded rack. Slaves and citizens, plebeians and princes, the dignity of age and the tenderness of youth, were alike exposed to the most cruel tortures; and the terrors of a malicious information, which might select them as the accomplices, or even as the witnesses, perhaps of an imaginary crime, perpetually hung over the heads of the principal citizens of Rome. He put to death so many individuals of rank, in addition to the assassination of so many of his friends and relatives, that Rome at last cried out against him. He was openly insulted by the populace in the streets. Placards were put upon the palace gates, denouncing him as the second Nero. His residence at Rome ere long became hateful to him, and he quit it forever. He proceeded to the East to lay the foundations of a city that would rival Rome—a city destined to perpetuate his name, and to survive his empire and his religion.

The winding channel through which the waters of the Euxine flow with a rapid and incessant course toward the Mediterranean, became celebrated in the history of antiquity by the name of the Bosphorus. At an obtuse point, commanding the opposite shores of Europe and Asia, where the waves of the Thracian Bosphorus meet and repel each other, stood olden Byzantium. Strongly guarded by nature, but yet on every side accessible to the benefits of commercial intercourse, its advantages and incomparable position had been contemplated and described by the historians of antiquity many centuries before the reign of Constantine. The place appears to have been formed by nature for the center and capital of a great empire. Here, where it is said the Romans derived their fabulous origin, where every prospect of beauty, of safety, and of wealth seemed united in a single spot, Constantine determined to erect a city that should be an eternal monument of his name and reign, and that should be the mistress of the luxurious East, as Rome had been of the West. In the interminable forests that over-

shadowed the shores of the Euxine, and the celebrated quarries of white marble in the little island of Proconnesus, were inexhaustible materials; and the wealth, the labor, and the genius of millions were at his command.

And so he commenced the building of Constantinople in 327—"by the command of God," he says in one of his rescripts. But it is probable if any God ever gave him a command, it would have been not to assassinate his wife and son. Some estimate may be formed of the expense bestowed by the master of Rome on the foundation of the city of his imperial residence, by the allowance of two millions five hundred thousand pounds for the construction of the walls, the porticoes, and the aqueducts.

Like Rome, the city of Constantine occupied seven hills. The Bosphorus and the Hellespont were the two gates, which could always be closed against a naval enemy, or opened to the fleets of commerce. The buildings of the new city were executed by the best artificers that imperial liberality could procure, and were decorated by the hands of the most celebrated masters of the age of Pericles and Alexander. Unable to revive the genius of Phidias and Lysippus, his rapacious vanity prompted him to appropriate their immortal productions; and by his commands the cities of Greece and Asia were despoiled of their most valuable ornaments. Constantine urged the progress of the work with the impatience of a lover, and the walls, the porticoes, and the principal edifices were completed in a few years, or, according to some accounts, in a few months.

At length the founder prepared to celebrate the dedication of the city, and to consecrate it to the virgin mother of God. The games and pomp of this memorable festival were such as may not be described. Constantine caused a statue of himself to be framed of gilt wood, and this, bearing in its right hand a small image of the genius of the place, was drawn in a triumphal car, accompanied by guards carrying white tapers and clothed in the richest apparel, upon each returning birthday of the city. When this arrived opposite the throne of the reigning emperor, he rose from his seat, and, with grateful reverence, adored the memory of his predecessor. At the

festival of the dedication an edict, engraved on a column of marble, bestowed the title of Second or New Rome on the city of Constantine. But the name of Constantinople has ever since prevailed, and, after the revolution of fifteen centuries, still perpetuates the name of its founder.

In order to people his new seat of empire at the expense of the ancient capital, Constantine induced the noblest Roman families, the most opulent senators, the equestrian order and their innumerable attendants, to repair thither. Indeed, it has been said that he built houses for them on the exact model of their Roman palaces, and gratified them with an agreeable surprise. He assigned his favorites lands and pensions for the support of their dignity. He alienated the demesnes of Pontus and Asia to grant hereditary estates to the citizens of the new city. As an encouragement to strangers and plebeians, frequent and regular distributions of wine and oil, of corn, bread, money, and provisions, were made with such prodigality as almost exempted the poorest from the necessity of labor.

An annual tribute of corn imposed on Egypt was applied to feed the lazy populace of the Christian capital. The emperor ordered that the fleet of Alexandria should transport to Constantinople the grain which it had before supplied Rome during four months of the year. The result of these regulations was a rapid increase of the population. New piles of buildings were hurriedly crowded together, scarcely affording space in the narrow streets for the perpetual throng of men, of horses, and carriages, and in less than a century Constantinople disputed with Rome itself for pre-eminence in riches and luxury and numbers. Soon after the age of Constantine a separation was made of the two empires, Rome being the capital of the western and Constantinople of the eastern. The eastern empire endured many centuries after the fall of the western.

A few years before his death the Christian emperor espoused the cause of the Arians; in fact he became an Arian himself, recalled the banished bishops, rebuilt their churches, and favored the sect that had hitherto been the object of his bitterest persecution. At the mature age of sixty-four, after a

short illness, Constantine ended his memorable career in 337, at the palace Aquyrion, in the suburbs of Nicomedia, whither he had retired for the benefit of the air and the warm baths. He had celebrated the thirtieth year of his reign. None of his predecessors since Augustus had ruled Rome for so long a period. His corpse was carried to the city which was destined to preserve his name and memory as its founder. His body was adorned with the vain symbols of greatness, the purple and the diadem, and was deposited on a golden bed in one of the apartments of the palace, which had been splendidly furnished and illuminated for that purpose. The demonstrations of mourning surpassed those practiced on any previous occasion. The empire was divided between his three sons, Constantine, Constantius, and Constans.

And now we will submit to the just judgment of impartial history the character and career of the first of the Christian emperors. That he had some of the qualities of a great statesman and general is not gainsaid, but that he was a saint and a paragon of perfection, as some of his pious apologists would fain have us believe, will never be admitted by any who read the history of Rome. He built Constantinople, but it was at the expense of, and in order to revenge himself upon, the Eternal City. In founding the Eastern capital, he planted the germs of rivalry and dissension that resulted in the division of the empire; and his political policy contributed more toward the ruin of Rome than the irruptions of the Northern barbarians. In establishing Christianity and giving it the guaranty of government, he imposed upon after generations the greatest curse that ever afflicted the human race. Christ declared that he came not to bring peace but a sword. Peter, the rock upon which he established his church, smote off an ear with the sword. That was the extent of the power of the church in Peter's time—to strike off ears. But that imperial parricide, Constantine, established the church upon the throne of the great Roman world, and committed to its greedy clutch the sword of universal empire. Christ's name has been a synonym for blood ever since. Says John Alberger, in his "Monks and Popes," "Had Constantine the Great, though frenzied with ambition and crimsoned with guilt,

beheld the boundless ocean of gore which was destined to flow from an incorporation of Christianity with the civil power, and to roll its heavy surge over all future time, he would have been more obdurate than a fiend had he not cowed his head in horror at the frightful vision, and dropped in mercy the pen already inked to inaugurate the tremendous catastrophe."

And now, what of the character of this most celebrated of Christians? Eusebius, Gregory Nazianzen, and Christian historians thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Romans iii, 7 ("For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my *lie* unto his glory, why yet should I also be judged as a sinner?"), will tell us that he was a great and good man. The gratitude of Christians has invented virtues for, and excused the crimes of, this powerful patron of their religion with all the extravagance of pious flattery. He has been considered by them almost equal to the apostles. The church is certainly more indebted to him than to any other man. No other potentate ever did so much for the cause of Christ. Charlemagne cut the throats of 4,500 Saxons in one day because they would not be baptized. This measure, though it abolished the Saxons, still did not add numerically to the strength of the church. But Constantine pursued a better policy. He bought candidates for baptism. He purchased souls for salvation at an easy rate. He saved sinners through the merits of a gift enterprise. A white garment and twenty pieces of gold were the premiums promised by the emperor to every baptized convert. In one year twelve thousand men were baptized at Rome, besides a proportionate number of women and children. No wonder the church cherishes his memory.

But though the church has decorated Constantine with every attribute of a saint and a hero, though he was placed by the Senate of Rome among the gods, and by the Christians of the East among the saints, he stands out in the light of authentic facts a murderous monster, and the most abhorred tyrant whose vices and cruelties ever dishonored the imperial purple. To learn the true character of Constantine inquire of Julian, of Zosimus, of Sozomen, and of Victor. They say

he was cruel, ambitious, and sanguinary; that he was a prodigal, a sensualist, and a public robber. He was all these, but still a Christian. He was, as already related, the murderer of his father-in-law, his brother-in-law, his nephew, his son, and his wife—all this, but still a zealous propagator of Christianity. The truth and candor of history will yet compel the Christian world to blush for shame at the character and career of this most infamous and conspicuous champion of the church.

EUSEBIUS BISHOP OF CÆSAREA, A. D. 315.—This man has been styled the father of ecclesiastical history. He was a man of learning, ability, and great industry. He is reputed to have been born in Cæsarea, in Palestine, in the year 270, and to have lived to be seventy years of age. He was bishop in the place of his birth from 315 to 340. There were several persons by the name of Eusebius, the most conspicuous of which was Eusebius, bishop of Nicomedia. The two flourished at the same time, and died within two years of each other. Eusebius, the writer of ecclesiastical history, was by far the most important character, and to him the church is greatly indebted for much of what is called church history, which has been transmitted to modern times. He was called Pamphilus, in honor of his very particular friend by that name, who suffered martyrdom.

St. Jerome gives a catalogue of the works which Eusebius wrote—fifteen books of the Chronicon, or Evangelical Preparation, twenty on Evangelical Preparation, five on Divine Apparition, ten of Ecclesiastical History, ten books of commentary on the prophet Isaiah, three books on the life of his friend Pamphilus, six on the defense of Origen, thirty books against Porphyry, eight against Hierocles, four of the life of Constantine, three against Marcellus, one on Topics, and others on Mythology, Fatal Destiny, etc. Of all these his Ecclesiastical History is by far the most important to the world, and is pronounced by Taylor among the most defective of his writings. He was an Arian in belief, but did not enter into the contest with the followers of Athanasius with as much bitterness as did many. Some have claimed that he was not a firm believer in the system of religion in favor of

which he wrote so largely, but the charge is not well sustained. He lived in an age of controversy, and if he was not as belligerent as many, he entered with not a little zeal into the contests which divided the Christians of the fourth century.

It is with his reliability as a writer and historian that we have the most to do. His Christian admirers of course try hard to sustain his reliability, but they cannot but admit that there were errors in many of his statements. Dr. Lardner, who shows an evident wish to say nothing unkind or severe of Eusebius, writes in this way: "With a very extensive knowledge of literature he seems to have had the agreeable accomplishments of the courtier. He was both a bishop and a man of the world. . . . Some may wish that he had not joined with the Arian leaders in the hard treatment that was given Eustatius, bishop of Antioch, Athanasius, of Alexandria, and Marcellus, of Ancyra. But it should be considered that Christian bishops in general, after the conversion of Constantine, seem to have thought that they had a right to depose and banish all ecclesiastics who did not agree with them upon the points of divinity controverted at that time. Finally, though there may be some things exceptionable in his writings and conduct, his zeal for the Christian religion, his affection for the martyrs, his grateful respect for his friend Pamphilus, his diligence in collecting excellent materials and in composing useful works for the benefit of mankind, his caution and scrupulousness in *not vouching for the truth* of Constantine's story of the apparition of the cross, as well as other things, fully satisfy me, *notwithstanding what some may say*, that he was as good as well as a great man."

To these remarks of Dr. Lardner's, Taylor adds these words respecting Eusebius by way of a foot-note: "But surely this lying by proxy is but a more sneaking and cowardly way of lying. He knew that the falsehood was asserted, and profited by the falsehood. He lent his influence to it, and subscribed it with the consent of a criminal silence." Banonius and other sincere professors of the Christian faith have branded Eusebius as "the great falsifier of ecclesiastical history," "a wily sycophant," "a consummate hypocrite," and

"a time-serving persecutor." "Indeed," says Taylor, "there is no fair evidence in anything that appears in his writings or is known of his life to support our wish, for the honor of human nature, to believe that he himself believed the Christian religion. Had he done so, can we think that he would have deemed it necessary to promote that cause by forgery and imposture, by trickery and falsehood, as he has constantly endeavored to do?" Dr. Lardner again says of him, "He had great zeal for the Christian religion." And to this extent he was right; but Eusebius should not have attempted to support it by weak and false arguments, and by making false statements. Dr. Lardner adds, "It is wonderful that Eusebius should think Philo's Therapeutæ were Christians, and that their ancient writings should be our gospels and epistles" (Lardner, vol. i, p. 363).

It cannot be denied that Eusebius acted the part of a courtier and sycophant in the life which he wrote of the wicked Constantine, wherein he tried to make a saint of a man of the blackest crimes. He did what Josephus said the Greeks were noted for, in "the writing of fabulous narratives, some of them endeavored to please the cities or the kings by writing in their commendation. Baron Bunsen, in his "Egypt," Vol. I, p. 200, says, "Eusebius had undertaken, in a very unscrupulous and arbitrary spirit, to mutilate history." Prof. John W. Draper bears the same testimony. The most noted instance of interpolation and forgery which Eusebius is believed to have perpetrated is the celebrated passage from Josephus which alludes to Jesus, and which has already been quoted and considered in previous pages. Eusebius was the first writer who called attention to this spurious passage, and it is probably justly charged to him. Lardner, who tries to be as favorable as possible to the primitive ecclesiastical historian, does not hesitate to pronounce the passage in question a forgery, and he has little doubt that Eusebius was himself the one who penned it. This opinion, moreover, is shared in by great numbers of competent judges, including Gibbon, Dr. Kippis, Faber, and others, who have given the subject examination. It is wholly unlikely that an orthodox Jew would accept the wandering Jesus, who was ignominiously arrested

and executed, as the national Messiah who was looked for to restore the nation to splendor and glory. The passage itself, in this light of the matter, is its own refutation. Madame Blavatsky, in "Isis Unveiled," says: "This paragraph of sixteen lines has two equivocal assertions and one qualification. The latter is expressed in the following sentence, 'If at least it is right to call him a man.' The equivocal assertions are contained in, 'This is the Anointed,' and in that 'Jesus appeared to them on the third day alive.'" If Josephus were to make use of such language he would most assuredly stultify himself. The Messiah was still expected by Josephus as well as by the Jews generally, and he could not have accepted the ostracized, despised, and tabooed reformer of Galilee for the Messiah to whom the nation were looking. The strong suspicion of the world as to the forgery thus committed in the name of Josephus must ever hang over Eusebius, the father of ecclesiastical history.

His conscience having a very accommodating quality, he was able to make his pen conform and do work, good, bad, and indifferent, as the needs of the church most required. He was clearly a believer in Paul, who said, "Let us do evil that good may come;" also, "Being crafty I caught you with guile;" and again, "For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?"

Eusebius was also an apt follower of the somewhat learned but questionable Tertullian, whose powerful intellect, ardent temper, and austere manner, gave him the titles of "untrustworthy," "*Outré*," "insolent," "ferocious," "without charity," and the "most intolerant of his century." It is generally believed that Eusebius is responsible in a great degree for what we know of Tertullian, and if he wished to create a churchman, the character given to Tertullian would be the very one he would most desire. For humanity's sake it is better to suppose that nine-tenths of Tertullian is mythical, having existed only in the fertile brain of Eusebius. Madame Blavatsky truthfully says: "It is as fortunate for us as it is unfortunate for the Roman church that such clever sleight of hand as that resorted to by Eusebius is rather difficult in our

century. It was easier to pervert chronology for the sake of making synchronisms in the days of the bishop of Cæsarea than it is now, and while history exists no one can help people knowing that Plato lived six hundred years before Irenæus took it into his head to establish a new doctrine from the ruins of Plato's older academy" (*Isis Unveiled*, vol. i, p. 288).

It was the custom of Eusebius, in manipulating his incidents in ecclesiastical history to suit the needs and purposes of the church, "to accommodate them to the faith of the orthodox." He too describes, it must be remembered, Christianity as it appeared to him, and as he wished it to appear to others—that the Therapeuts of Egypt were in all respects the same society that were afterward known as Christians, and that the sacred writings of the former became the gospels and epistles of the latter. The same view is adopted by Gibbon in his "*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*" (c. xv), who suggests that it was not they who embraced Christianity, but Christianity that embraced the Therapeuts. He says, too, that the progress of Christianity was at first slow and confined within the limits of the single city of Alexandria, and so slow was the progress of this religion that, notwithstanding the rhetorical flourishes and exaggerations of the Fathers, "we are possessed of an authentic record which attests the state of religion in the first and most populous city of the then known world. In Rome, about the middle of the third century, and after a peace of thirty-eight years, the clergy consisted of but one bishop, forty-six presbyters, fourteen deacons, forty-two acolytes, and fifty readers, exorcists, and porters." He estimates the number of Christians in Rome at 50,000 when the total population was 1,000,000, while in the whole Roman empire the proportion was only about one in twenty before the important conversion of Constantine. (See Gibbon, c. xv.)

This was the very time covered by the history of Eusebius, and how different a picture it is from that presented by the pious but dishonest bishop. We well know that the materials used by Eusebius in constructing the Christian church were extant, but in the shape of the sacred writings of the Thera-

peuts, Gnostics, and other sects, religious, communistic, and ascetic, as Eusebius has himself admitted, and it is not sure that even Gibbon has not assumed or admitted too much in naming any as Christians when there is no positive proof that the name even had been used in the church.

It is extremely improbable that the writings of a few unlearned fishermen, laborers, and idlers of the first Christian era should be so replete with the wisdom, truths, and sound judgment of the ages and of already established institutions—bishops exercising spiritual and temporal authority, as did Peter and his associates in the receipt of established revenues and with a code of laws equal to almost any emergency. These things are usually the result of centuries of growth, experience, change, evolution, revolution, but in this case we are confronted with a condition of things that almost suggests the impossible, which cannot be accepted. It is utterly unreasonable to offer any such ripe growth as the beginning or the work of a day. It is far more probable that Eusebius and Gibbon are right, that Christianity came from the long-existing Therapeuts of Egypt, sacred writings and all, and that the system of the latter gradually became the Christian system. It must be seen at a glance that this theory of the rise of Christianity is far more probable than that commonly received.

One of the most conspicuous features in Christianity is that its early founders and historians felt a strong desire to have it believed that the system was of superhuman and supernatural origin, and they studiously kept this in the background, however well aware they were of the fact that its rites, ceremonies, sacraments, dogmas, its mythical forms, and even its mystical words and expressions, were long before used by the Eleusinians of Greece, the Therapeuts of Egypt, the worshipers of Mithra in Persia, and of Christna and Buddha in India. It is now pretty well understood that Christianity is not materially unlike other systems of religion the world has known; they have all been of slow growth, the younger has always borrowed from the older, they have all contained superstitions and absurdities, and they have all been of human origin—all the religions of the world have been man-made, and were got-

ten up on earth. None had their origin in heaven or with God. Everything that takes place is a natural event and is produced by a natural cause. Supernaturalism is a myth that dwells only in the brains of dreamers and over-imaginative people.

OTHER EARLY CHRISTIAN FATHERS.

Space cannot be taken for sketches and descriptions of the many other Fathers and founders of the church. It would require a volume as large as this to give anything like a full description of all of them ; those which have not been named must be hurried over rapidly, even mentioning but a small share of them. Those that have been named are either very mythical or do not present the most enviable record ; they were not men of the most worthy and reliable character. Research has shown that their writings are little more than a record of the legends and traditions floating about during the early Christian centuries, mixed, of course, with a very large proportion of pagan dogmas and mysteries, changed and modified in some instances to suit the purposes of the founders of the new religion. A few more of these fathers, dignitaries, and leaders may be scheduled :

ST. VICTOR is claimed as one of the first bishops of Rome, and began the movement which ultimately placed the bishops of Rome at the head of the Christian church.

ST. ANTHONY is famous chiefly on account of his laziness and filthiness, wearing nothing but a sheepskin, which he never changed. He never washed his body. It can hardly be believed that a decent God would be pleased with such a lazy, filthy being.

ATHANASIUS has been called the father of theology and orthodoxy, and was the author of the famous " Athanasian Creed." He was chosen, when a boy, for theological life, by Alexander, bishop of Alexandria. He spent some time with the hermit St. Anthony in the desert. His education, save in theology, did not amount to much. He was in the council of Nice, and was very active and belligerent against the Arians. He was a strong trinitarian and a zealous partisan.

He was made bishop of Alexandria, but was deposed and restored several times. He spent twenty years of his life in banishment. He had warm friends and bitter enemies. Constantine frequently said of him that he was "proud, turbulent, obstinate, and intractable."

GREGORY OF NAZIANZEN, BISHOP OF SARINA, was a pious and devout man. He wrote many hymns in Greek, but most distinguished himself by drawing a very melancholy picture of the ecclesiastical contests and quarrels in the various councils held in his time. In a letter to Procopius he said he "fled all assemblies of bishops, because he never saw a good and happy end of any council, but that they rather increased than lessened the evil; that the love of contention and ambition always overcame their reason." On another occasion he expressed a determination to never again go to any council, because "nothing was to be heard there but geese and cranes, who fight without understanding one another."

ST. JEROME was wild and dissipated in early manhood, but afterward became very devout and self-denying, like the hermits of India and the ascetics of Egypt. He passed a number of years in solitary life, and imposed the most severe discipline upon himself. He thought God was particularly pleased when men made themselves wretched.

ST. AMBROSE zealously espoused the cause of the Athanasians, and having been created bishop at Milan, he had it in his power to become a strong antagonist of Arianism, which he showed in many ways. He spent his life in contention. He introduced many pagan rites and ceremonies into Christian worship.

CHRYSOSTOM was another admirer of the hermit and monastic life. He dwelt four years with a company of monks in the mountains in the vicinity of Antioch. Afterward he retired to a solitary cave, where he committed the Hebrew and Christian scriptures to memory. For two years he did not lie down. He was first made presbyter and afterward archbishop of Constantinople. He required very strict morality from his priests and bishops, and deposed several for misconduct. He was very kind to the poor and needy, but was so severe upon the clergy that with many of them he be-

came very unpopular, and was compelled to flee for his life. He was, however, restored to his charge; but his enemies caused him to be arrested again by soldiers. A serious tumult occurred in his church, where he was performing religious service at the time. To prevent further difficulty he surrendered himself. At the moment of his departure the church took fire, and burned to the ground. He was accused of having kindled it. His enemies in the church kept him in exile, and treated him with such severity that death came to his relief. He wrote extensively, and in his commentaries rejected the allegorical mode of interpretation then so prevalent.

STEPHEN I, Bishop of Rome, was notorious for his quarrelsome disposition, being constantly embroiled in bitter contentions with his brother bishops.

CALLISTUS was a notorious thief and defaulter, who, by a strange combination of circumstances, was elevated from the workhouse to the Roman see.

THEODOSIUS caused the massacre, in cold blood, of fifteen thousand innocent people. His persecutions of the Arians has made his name infamous forever.

ST. CYRIL caused the murder of the talented and beautiful young student and philosopher Hypatia, and through his machinations, it is believed, the famous Alexandrian library was burnt.

SIRICUS derives his principal importance from his propagation, in the fourth century, of celibacy among the priesthood.

DIOSCORUS, Bishop of Alexandria, assisted by a friend or fiend, assaulted and beat Flavianus, bishop of Constantinople, so severely that he died in three days, and this in the presence of his brother bishops at the celebrated "robber council" of Ephesus.

ST. AUGUSTINE, in his writings, laid down the laws and precepts by which the church has been enabled to enslave, debase, and degrade mankind, and to make it resemble the ideal of total depravity upon which the Christian scheme of salvation is built.

SIMON STYLITES, the great ascetic fanatic and saint, was noted for his laziness, holiness, and filthy habits. He lived

on the top of a pillar until it resembled an exaggerated and unclean parrot's perch, and finally, starved and stifled in the odor and effluvia of sanctity and filth, he died one of the greatest of Christian fools.

CLOVIS THE GREAT deliberately assassinated all the princes belonging to his family; but he spared no pains to propitiate the bishop of Rome, who in consideration of his piety and usefulness conferred upon him the title of the "Most Christian King and Eldest Son of the Church."

SIXTUS, the third bishop of Rome of that name, was guilty of incest and rape. When his filthy deeds were brought to the light he caused his accuser to be poisoned.

VIRGILIUS was distinguished for his perfidy, debauchery, and crime. His life was one long record of abomination. He was a suborner, a sodomite, a knave, a miser, and an assassin. He killed with a club a poor child who resisted his infamous embrace. Notwithstanding his crimes he is now worshiped as a saint by all good Catholics.

GREGORY THE GREAT destroyed the monuments of Roman magnificence, set fire to the Palatine library, destroyed the works of Titus, Livy, and the most famous Latin poets because they opposed superstitious worship. He made war upon everything which bore the name of art or science.

BONIFACE III. was elevated to the see of Rome by Phocas, one of the most bloodthirsty monarchs that ever cursed the earth.

CHURCH QUARRELS AND CORRUPTIONS.

Whether there ever was a time when the leaders were faultless, pure, and peaceful is a matter of much doubt, but it is well known that in the earliest centuries crimes, quarrels, and dissensions found easy access even among the Fathers and saints. Many of them were guilty of the worst of crimes. A tithe of the cases of wrong-doing and bitter quarrels cannot be mentioned, but a few may be alluded to.

The avarice of the Christian clergy has always been a marked feature, and this led to the perpetration of many frauds and confidence games by which the credulous were

easily deceived and fleeced. A worship of relics early became diffused in the church, and the rascally priests and monks availed themselves of this prevalent absurdity and multiplied relics to an incredible degree, with which they filched money from their dupes with but little trouble. It has been said that enough wood claimed to have been a part of the cross on which Jesus was crucified was sold by priests to build many extensive buildings. As the priests found they could thus easily acquire money, they became fond of good living and earthly pleasures, and soon neglected their fastings and became sensuous gormands—a race of licentious hypocrites.

Love of power was also and has ever since been a distinguishing feature with Christian bishops and popes. The high dignity of pontiff changed the spirit of those who were clothed with it, inspired them with pride, and so flattered their ambition that they soon regarded themselves as far superior to all other men in the world. So the bishops of the "Holy City" commenced near the close of the second century to claim for themselves a jurisdiction over other churches, and in the third had nearly abandoned all pretensions to humility, and become rampant and oppressive tyrants. Corruption increased, and the despotism of the clergy weighed down upon the people. St. Victor, in the years 194–202, had prepared the way for the dominion of the pontiff, and his successors did not neglect on any occasion to extend their power. To this bishop Christianity is indebted for the introduction of the reign of popes in the world, whose rule has continued sixteen hundred and fifty years with a continuous and oppressive tyranny which the world has not experienced in any other direction. It is asserted that St. Victor appropriated to the wants of the clergy the goods and lands which Christians offered to him, and divided the revenues proportionably to their duties and labors. The usage, however, was soon changed. The priests who performed their duty the most faithfully were the worst paid, while bishops and archbishops became the corrupt possessors of immense wealth, for which they compensated the world with supine indolence and shameful licentiousness.

The dishonesty of the priests in the very first ages of Christianity was as bad and damnable as the mind is capable

of conceiving. They reduced to a system the various arts employed, by which they were able not only to delude the people in matters of belief, but to obtain such a supremacy over them as to reduce them to a state of absolute slavery.

The name of St. Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, has been mentioned. He flourished about the year 253. His treatise on morals is rigorous in regard to ecclesiastical discipline, which is sufficient proof that the clergy had already become deeply tainted with gross immorality. A somewhat singular story, bearing on the great social question of that day, is related of him. A bishop is said to have consulted him by letter whether he should bestow the communion on holy females who, having taken the vow of virginity, pretended to exercise themselves in conquering the spirit of evil by sharing their beds with young priests and deacons. Cyprian replied that if they had, in truth, preserved their virginity under such circumstances he could not refuse them communion; but it would be better and safer that they should not in future renew so dangerous a test in order to prove to what self-control and virtue they had attained. The saint was doubtless sound in this opinion, and the fact that such practices were indulged in gives a pretty clear view that the "freelove" practices of the church were early developed, and they have not wholly been discontinued to this day.

To show how the clergy quarreled in the holy days of primitive Christianity, it may be well to cite the case of Pontiff Stephen I., who called even St. Cyprian extremely uncomplimentary names. He denominated him "a false Christ," "a false prophet," "a fraudulent workman," and in order not to be understood as speaking for himself, had the meanness to reproach him in the name of others. In return St. Cyprian applied to the pontiff such terms as "arrogant," "obstinate," "the enemy of Christianity," "the defender of heretics," "preferring human traditions to divine inspiration," etc. This however was mildness itself compared with the bitter and rancorous quarrels among the pillars of the church which prevailed in those early centuries.

Much has been said of the persecutions under Diocletian. Though the accounts are greatly exaggerated, there was prob-

ably something to answer as a foundation for the edifice that has been built thereon. In ingenuity and heartlessness of torture, possibly the heathen authorities partially equaled for a short time what the church itself, when it became strong enough, kept up for centuries, and history will truly point to the same as among the most cruel periods of outrage upon human rights that has ever taken place. As to the reason or cause for it, possibly Eusebius throws some light on the subject. After describing the success the church had met with in making proselytes and acquiring wealth and honor a little previous to the persecution, he says: "But too great liberty caused a relaxation of discipline. . . . The bishops, animated the one against the other, excited quarrels and disorders. At length, when falsehood and deceit were carried to the utmost excess, justice lifted its arm to punish, and permitted that the faithful, who had entered upon the profession of arms, should be the first to be persecuted. Still they remained in a state of culpable insensibility. Instead of appeasing the anger of God, they added crimes to crimes. The priests, despising the rules of piety, contended and quarreled among themselves, fomented enmities and hatred, and disputed for the first place in secular affairs."

This gives quite an inkling of the corruption of the ecclesiastical dignitaries toward the close of the third century. Another author, Platinus, continues: "Since that period the derelictions of the clergy have increased in arithmetical, though it may be refined, ratio. The priests have shown themselves virtually always the same—avaricious, ambitious, debauchers, frauds, vindictive, always enemies of repose and true morality, always dissimulators." It at least seems most singular that a pure system of religion should produce such results—that a really good tree should bear such miserable, unhealthy, and poisonous fruit.

There are almost any number of individual cases of moral weakness and depravity that might be cited, showing the low state of morals in those early days, but time and space preclude. One or two cases only will be alluded to now. Christian anchorites and hermits have been long and extravagantly praised by the church for their superior saintliness. It is well

to know their origin. A young Christian of Alexandria, by the name of Paul, the heir of a rich patrimony, had retired to one of his estates in order to live far from the world with his brother-in-law and a young sister, for whom he had conceived a violent passion. But one day his brother-in-law, having detected him in incest, threatened to surrender him to the commissioners of the emperor. Affrighted by the threat Paul fled to the solitude of the mountains, where little by little he recovered tranquillity of mind. After great repentance he claimed to have had a vision or a dream, in which an angel appeared to him and promised him pardon for his crime on condition that he would pass his life in solitude. Paul decided to act upon the hint thus given, and thus, in consequence of the horrible crime of incest between a brother and sister, the pious Paul the Hermit inaugurated a mode of life—which however had preceded him many centuries—by which a great amount of sanctity and holiness was supposed to be acquired and the love of heaven thereby marvelously secured. Shall, therefore, that act of incest be counted a virtue?

In the great Donatic controversy which raged in the time of Constantine, there was one Cecilian, a priest, who had been chosen bishop of Carthage, opposed by a party of deacons, who had received in deposit the vessels of the church during a period of persecution. These designing persons, hoping to divide among themselves the rich spoils, raised altar against altar. Two candidates for the pontificate, enraged at not having been chosen to fill the see, joined them and drew into their party a lady of illustrious birth named Lucilla. Women are noted for their skilfulness in engaging in plots of this kind, even of all kinds. Lucilla was rich, beautiful, and surrounded by numerous friends. For a long time her conduct had brought scandal on the church. She was burning with a desire to be avenged upon Cecilian, who had reproved her in full assembly for her levity and vices. The three parties, united, formed a powerful faction, which declared against Cecilian and refused to communicate with him. And last, but not least, seventy bishops seconded their designs. Having assembled in Carthage, filled with hatred and a desire for

revenge, they condemned Cecilian, because he had refused to appear before them to justify himself; because he had been ordained by traitors; and lastly, because he had hindered the faithful from taking provisions to the martyrs who were imprisoned in the previous persecution. After the decision the Fathers, regarding the see of Carthage as vacant, proceeded to a new election, and ordained thereto a man named Majorin, a domestic of Lucilla. Such was the origin of the Donatist schism. Donatus, who succeeded Majorin. as anti-bishop of Carthage, was subsequently condemned at a Lateran synod as the author of most of the scandals against Cecilian, the regular bishop; and was also convicted of great crimes by his own confession. The other bishops were confirmed in their dignities and permitted to return to their sees, though they had been ordained by the schismatic Majorin. In spite of the condemnation which they had encountered, the Donatists persevered in their schism. They boldly complained of the Council of Rome, affirming that the judges had been corrupted by Cecilian, and even in the time of St. Augustine they accused Pope Melchiades of having delivered up the sacred books to the pagans, and of having offered incense to the idols.

This is but one instance of the many long and furious quarrels with which the early Christians so eagerly amused themselves, and in which they showed the Christian love which actuated them. More will be said of these quarrels and schisms further on. The "Persecutions" will next be taken up, the same being a contribution from the writer's friend, Prof. A. L. Rawson.

THE TEN PERSECUTIONS OF THE CHURCH.

The historians of the Christian church, in their anxiety to carry the origin of their system of divine worship as far back in time as the supposed crucifixion and other ideal and legendary events narrated in the New Testament, and which are, without any solid basis in fact of history, located in the reigns of the emperors Tiberius, Nero, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, and others of that period, have among other inventions per-

petrated a series of slanderous stories called the "Ten Persecutions of Early Christians," and which are dated A. D. 64, 95, 107, 118, 202, 235, 250, 257, 272, and 303. The desire was so strong to magnify this feature of the "early Christians" that the persecutions, inventions, or exaggerations were continued for three centuries later, the more important of which later dates are A. D. 337, 484, and 609.

The "ten persecutions" are laid at the door of the pagans, for there was no other power in those days besides Rome in the political world.

The author of one of these "histories" says, in the introduction, that "to go back to the earliest workings of the Christian life in the world, to enter into communion with the primitive faith and zeal, to hold up for contemplation the grand characters of ancient believers, to witness their sublime patience and righteous sincerity, to trace the movements of God's own hand in the events that shaped and extended his invincible church, to watch the growth and change of opinions, to be warned by the corruptions of truth and the inroads of error, all this is surely a right and noble part of a true Christian religion."

He begins "The history of the Christian church" "with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, mentioned in the Book of Acts."

Having accepted the Acts of the Apostles as veritable history we need to look no further for evidence as to his place and value among historians in this age, and we need to look no further for facts, truth, or veracity and integrity among the many writers who have written on church history from the earliest to the latest. They have all, without exception, written for the purpose of building up the church, assuming it to be right, and its teachers inspired, and therefore infallible, and the so-called histories of their sayings and doings indisputably true.

Critics and scholars have recently become acquainted with the records of certain events in the ancient world through a better reading of old, and the discovery of new, materials—writings on stone, papyrus, pottery, coins and gems, preserved for us by the friendly dust of many centuries—and have been

able to correct the text of Homer, to furnish a new commentary to the Iliad, and to critically examine and determine the relative purity of the Bible accounts of antiquity. These ancient witnesses cannot be set aside by a prayer or a puff. They compel us to form new opinions on the assumptions of the Greeks and Hebrews of an extreme antiquity, and of heroes and wonderful exploits, so much so that we must conclude that the habit of brag and exaggeration seems to have been in the atmosphere of the Levant early and late, and to have affected the Christian historians as well as the pagans. There was no other safe period in which to locate the date of the supposed crucifixion, and having assumed a point of time—somewhere within a limit of four years—all other events, both real and assumed, must be made to harmonize chronologically with that date. The Christian era was first adopted as a style of reckoning 516 years after its pretended beginning. The fact is there was very little Christianity, either of form or spirit, before the fifth century, and so much has the history of it been falsified by pious writers for the glory of the church that it is now impossible, without new materials, to distinguish the true among the false passages, except where the assumption of antiquity is plainly disproved by contemporary records.

The first persecution is charged to Nero, emperor of Rome from A. D. 54 to 68, and to give color to this charge he was said to have been at the age of eighteen or twenty "utterly abandoned to vice and licentiousness in every form," and was "a cowardly, cruel drunkard," etc., a long list.

He was a pupil of the Stoic philosopher Seneca, an original thinker and an eloquent and popular writer, whose chief works that have been preserved are, *On Providence*, *On Tranquillity of Mind*, *On the Brevity of Life*, *On Natural Science*, and a *Collection of Maxims*. It is surprising that he had nothing to say against a new sect that is pretended to have given so much offense as to call down the emperor's enmity, and it is safer to conclude that if the Christians were known at all in that day they were so few and insignificant as to escape notice. Outside of the works of later Christian writers they are not named.

The Romans are said by the Christian writers to have been intolerant of the Christians of the early ages, from A. D. 64 to 303. Other writers, including the Romans themselves, say they were tolerant of all other systems of worship, and invited their votaries to a residence in the great city, with their gods in metal or stone, and to build temples for their rites and ceremonies. If they had made any exceptions in the case of a new sect it would have been recorded. There is no such record, and the so-called "first pagan persecution" is an idle tale.

It would be a waste of time and patience to tax the reader with the other idle tales of pretended persecutions under the emperors Domitian, Trajan, Adrian, Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerian, Aurelius, Diocletian, repeating the shallow and slanderous inventions of men who, like some of our Christian D.D.'s of to-day, believed and taught both by precept and example that it is honorable service to God and Christ to lie and deceive in the interest of the church.

These pretended events gave the inventors of "church history in the early ages" a large field for peopling with saints, heroes, and martyrs in the cause of Christ. The facility with which a saint was manufactured by the church biographers is somewhat interesting ethnographically. The saint-mongers were usually ingenious enough to fit each new specimen of their work into some unoccupied niche of the "universal mother church," so that now the entire army is supplied with spiritual soldiers and officers of every degree, carefully written up in their parentage, training, conversion, persecutions, and final crowning in martyrdom, and enrollment on the sacred pages of the calendar. Every day in the year has its saint this or that; some days have two or more; and unless the church rests in this work there will be very little room for the new-comers. Already the virtues, passions, good qualities, and kindly habits of humanity are personified in male or female saints, whose images are decked more or less richly and gorgeously, as their owners can afford. Some saints have many different disguises, St. Mary appearing in a new dress and a new face (white and pink in London, brunette in Rome, swarthy in Egypt, and black in Russia),

according to local requirements. In this manner was the early history of the church made, each writer inventing and illustrating his own special period, or improving on the work of his predecessors. This, from the view of the church, was expedient and good work; but seen from the other side is a fraud, a deception, and a crime of the meanest grade against humanity. The intention is to instil into the minds of children the belief that the church has had a continuous existence from A. D. 1 to the present, and has the authority and right to teach its contemptible dogmas, thus warping, dwarfing, and enslaving humanity in the interest of the church.

The ten persecutions have become a kind of historical axiom, adopted and used by all branches of the church, forgetting that their own writers admit that there was no such theory put forth until the fourth century, and probably did not appear before the sixth, in the writings of Lactantius; and it is believed by some to have been first made known by the inventive author of the so-called writings of Eusebius. The first detailed notice of them occurs in the writings of Severus, "the Christian Sallust," who died A. D. 410. He described nine, and said the tenth would occur as a universal persecution just before the second coming of Christ, which is very indefinite.

The most horrible events and excruciating torments are distributed with a judicious regard for propriety and dramatic effect. Nero sets fire to Rome, perhaps to roast out the Christian rats, and then lays the blame to the victims themselves; Domitian causes the death of forty thousand men, women, and children in such horrible style that his Roman historians refused to record the facts; Trajan, one of the greatest and best emperors of Rome, who was commended for his moderation, sound judgment, and simplicity of life, is said to have presided at the tribunal that condemned "Saint" Ignatius to death. As "Saint" Ignatius is a fictitious personage, the slander only produces a smile. The younger Pliny is said to have written a letter to Trajan inquiring what he should do with the Christians, he then being governor of Bithynia, and in which he praised their excellent morals. This letter is evidently a forgery and interpolation, for

Tacitus, the historian, whose "Annals," written under the eye of the emperor of Rome, make no mention of Christians anywhere in the empire.

The Emperor Hadrian is falsely charged with one of the "ten persecutions," although the greater part of his reign was spent in traveling through the vast Roman Empire of his day and in displays of his liberality, political wisdom, and love of the fine arts. His edicts form an important epoch in the history of Roman law. He patronized orators, poets, and artists, and wrote books both in poetry and prose. This fourth persecution is a myth.

Antoninus Pius succeeded Hadrian as emperor of Rome, and is charged with the martyrdom of "Saint" Polycarp, although the historians of his time said he was an excellent man and emperor, temperate, humane, learned, amiable, and eloquent.

The makers of the ten persecutions are divided on the question as to which of the two emperors, Antoninus or his successor Severus, it is safer to attribute the fifth persecution. As Severus was occupied all his reign in Syria, France, and England (Britain), he did not have the opportunity to injure—even if he had been willing—the various religious bodies in his empire. All were accorded equal rights so long as they kept the peace with each other; and yet the myth-mongers charge to him the torture and murder of Leonidas, the father of the Christian author Origen, so as to date Origen back a few centuries; of Irenæus, who is called bishop of Lyons in France, by way of making it appear that there was a church there in that early age, and other atrocities in various parts of the empire for the same object. The fifth persecution "is a slanderous myth."

Of Maximinus it is said that his hatred of his predecessor, Severus, was so great that he was "an enemy of the Christians." A thin myth.

Decius was emperor only two years, and yet in that time is said to have found time, in addition to the duties of his government, to carry on the most dreadful persecutions of the Christians, "who were now a recognized body in the state," (says one writer), and to cruelly torment the author Origen.

His hatred of Christians was kindled because they were attached to the family of a former emperor. Too thin!

The emperor Valerian is said to have "conferred a melancholy celebrity" on his persecutions by including in it the most distinguished prelate in Western Christendom, who was Cyprian, bishop of Carthage, in Africa, and Macrinus, a magician of Egypt, with "Saint" Laurence, archdeacon of Rome. There being no mention of these atrocities in any reliable history, we must lay them aside as fables. The eighth is also a myth.

Of the emperor Aurelian, who conquered the Asian Queen Zenobia, of Palmyra, it is said that "he issued sanguinary edicts toward the close of his life, but did not generally promulgate them." The ninth persecution is extremely thin.

"The final contest between paganism and Christianity drew near," under the emperor Diocletian, A. D. 303. It is said to have "gained a powerful ascendancy over the civilized world. Its churches rose in nearly every city of the empire, and Christians no longer declined or refused to aspire to the honors and profits of state offices." Philosophic paganism is said to have adopted the doctrine of the unity of the Deity, and to degrade all the gods of the other world into subordinate spirits. And yet it is said that Diocletian issued a decree in 303 "that all who refused to sacrifice to the Roman gods should be burned alive," prohibited public assemblies for worship of Christ, deposed all Christians from office and rank, and confiscated their property. In Italy and Gaul (France) the churches were destroyed, but the people were not molested. "Edict followed edict, each surpassing its predecessor in barbarity. Many were executed, many drowned, and many burnt alive. Bishops and citizens were imprisoned with the basest malefactors." The persecution was continued under the successor of Diocletian, Galerius, "a most implacable enemy of Christianity." But this emperor is said to have issued a decree in favor of the Christians on his death-bed, which requested them to intercede for him with their God. Christians were freed from prisons and mines, and hastened to rebuild their ruined churches. These stories are very thin.

The grand conclusion to this gloomy picture is the dazzling tableau of Constantine, as the first Christian emperor, gazing on the sign of the cross "in the sky, placed above the sun, just after it had attained its meridian, and bearing this inscription in Greek: 'By this, conquer.' The sign was interpreted as being the token of Christ's victory over death. The Christians affirmed that their Deity had thus made himself known. Then the banner with the cross was made, and the name of the meek and peaceful Jesus became the soldier's war-cry."

Constantine was baptized as a Christian on the last day of his life, as he was dying. His Christian reign in this life was brief, but sufficient to illustrate that sort of union between church and state. He had murdered his wife, son, and nephew, and permitted the assembly of the "First General Council of the Church" at Nicea, and made Byzantium his capital, changing its name to Constantinople.

The Christian element in Constantine's history is very thin and mythica¹. A great number of coins of his and succeeding reigns are shown, having what are called Christian emblems; but the evidence that there was any church in that age beyond that made by a few dreamers, discontented Gnostics, "advanced" Therapeuts, or "radical" pagans and Jews, is entirely wanting.

Increase of civilization modifies belief, and added stores of knowledge lay new foundations for religious systems and expose the absurdities of the older ones, which have enslaved, astonished, amused, and now disgust the better part of the people in civilized countries.

In closing this notice of the so-called "Ten Persecutions of the Christian Church," it may be well to say that Christian historians have a remarkable propensity for remembering and writing about what never occurred.

SAINTS AND SAINT MAKING.

Among the various articles of church furniture one of the most useful as well as ornamental is the saint. As a machine it is invaluable, serving as an invisible yet irresistible link

between this world and what the church calls purgatory, which is a sort of moral distillery, where the saints superintend the drawing off or running over of the lighter spirits into paradise.

As a church decoration the saint is indispensable, being required in the creed, the ritual, the hymns, the prayers, the sermon, even in the moral thunderbolt called a bull of excommunication, or anathemas, and in images large and small, always draped in the true clerical fashion, the patent for each saint being duly recorded, and either pictured in books, framed for domestic wall use, or cast in honest plaster for niches in the church or the mantelpiece at home.

The ancient Egyptians, or pagan Greeks, had these saints, or rather minor gods, in all places, public and private, in all sizes, from a vest pocket specimen for travelers' use to the immense colossus of brass or stone, or wood inlaid with ivory and gold, as in the case of the Jupiter of Phidias. Another Jupiter in bronze was baptised into the church at Rome and christened St. Peter, the toe of which is so frequently and fervently kissed by the faithful that it needs to be renewed from time to time. St. Peter's great church without its great bronze St. Peter would be incomplete, although saints in bronze, in marble, copper, in mosaic, in fresco, swarm in countless hosts in all parts of the vast edifice. The happy man who hit upon this transformation of a pagan god into a Christian saint was probably rewarded with a pocketfull of indulgences, besides perhaps gold enough to assist in the enjoyment of his reward.

This conversion of pagans into Christian saints is an old custom of the church, and has its good side. It preserves the traditions of the origin of the church itself, which was from the relics of dead systems of pagan ceremonial worship and the decaying forms of belief which were gathered by the faithful, and after shaping one way or another for two or three centuries were shaped into the Apostles' Creed, or the Athanasian Creed, and which were modified, enlarged, contracted, or otherwise improved to suit the local market, and have come down to us as the essence of the Bride of the Lord.

Sanctus is a good specimen of saint, and illustrates the peculiar method of construction. He is said to have been a

Christian martyr under Marcus Antoninus, and was a deacon at Vienna. "When put to the torture he bore it with great fortitude, only exclaiming, 'I am a Christian.' Red-hot plates of brass were applied to the most tender parts of his body, which contracted the sinews; but remaining inflexible he was remanded to prison. According to tradition, on being brought out from his confinement a few days after, his tormentors were astonished to find his wounds healed, and his person as perfect as before. He was again tortured and reconducted to prison, where he remained some time after. He at length received the crown of martyrdom by being beheaded, which took place about the middle of the second century."

The biography of this "saint," brief as it is, is yet long enough to illustrate many points in moral architecture. The name is indefinite, the date vague, the location at Vienna judicious, for little or nothing is recorded about that place in the second century. But the most valuable point of all is the fact that saints became so tenacious of life that roasting, broiling, boiling, racking, seemed to be mere pastimes to them, a few days being sufficient to make them whole again and ready for another grill. The only sure means of "crowning" them was to cut off the head, which seems to have been done only as a last resort after all other means had failed, either to extort a confession or produce death.

The lady saint is a more refined article. She was generally daughter to some pagan officer, consul, governor, or prince. As a specimen of the virgin martyr "Saint" Cecilia is a good one, and she is no common stuff, for she is accorded the honor of "The Patronage of Ecclesiastical Melody" by the Roman church, "on account of her excellence in vocal and instrumental music," "even the angels being overcome with the fascination of her harmony."

She was a daughter of a noble Roman, of the ancient family of Cæcilius, who were flattered by the poets with the claim of descent from a companion of Æneas, the founder of the Latin race in Italy. In early life she made a vow of perpetual chastity, but her family compelled her to marry a young nobleman named Valerianus, of course a pagan.

On the evening of the wedding Cecilia told her husband that he must withdraw from her chamber as she was nightly visited by an angel from heaven, who would kill him if found in her room. Valerianus was brave, and pleaded for an interview with said angel, which Cecilia declared to be impossible for a heathen, and promised it if he embraced Christianity, and he consented. Valerian threatened to kill any earthly lover he might find near her preferred to himself, but if she was really protected by an angel he desired to enjoy the same blessing. Cecilia said if his eyes were to be opened by baptism and illuminated by faith he should be so blessed. She directed him to go along the Appian Way until near the great Mole of Cecilia Metella, where he would see some beggars sitting by the wayside, to whom he was to give money and tell them Cecilia sent him to them to be conducted to the old man Urban. This he did, and was shown down into the very catacomb now called Saint Cecilia and Saint Callixtus, where he found Saint Urban the pope, who instructed him and baptized him that night. Soon after the husband found the wife at prayers in a closet with an angel "clothed in brightness," in the shape of a beautiful youth, who assured Valerianus that together with his brother he would be crowned with the blessings of martyrdom. He and his brother Tibertius, who was also baptized, were soon after beheaded, and Cecilia, remaining steadfast in the faith, was thrown into a caldron of boiling oil. Other accounts say she was stifled for a long time in a hot, dry bath. Surviving all kinds of tortures, she was finally beheaded about A. D. 280. Some writers place her martyrdom as early as 176 or 180. Signor De Rossi dates the martyrdom of St. Cecilia in the reign of Marcus Aurelius.

Her tomb is now pointed out in the catacombs at Rome, where she was laid tenderly by the hands of Pope St. Urban I, who afterward built a church over the spot known as "Santa Cecilia in Trastevere," and it now gives title to a cardinal priest. St. Clement VII presented her body to the Benedictine Sisters as a precious relic of the early martyrs. Clement VIII in 1599 opened her sarcophagus, and finding the body well preserved, and the drapery arranged in beautiful and expressive folds, caused a statue to be made of it,

which is to-day the admiration of countless numbers of the faithful who visit the church.

The church of "Saint" Cecilia is a marvel of ornate and costly work in precious metals, woods, mosaics, hangings; statuary, and decorations of every kind seen in such places. The "saint" and her husband are shown in statues draped in the ancient patrician robes—a white mantle over a tunic of green, with a golden border; the robe and peplum are of golden stuff, richly overwrought. A portrait of Pope Pascal I. is near. The companion saints are draped in harmony with their musical superioress. Her family, the Cæcili, having become Christians, provided burial places for twelve martyr popes, who lie near the original resting-place of their illustrious daughter. The cemetery in the catacombs was probably made by the Roman family of Metelli, whose estates were very large, and the site of which is still marked by the great mole called Cæcilia Metella. The church is ever ready to seize on any and all means of adding luster to its history, claiming that the nobility in ancient times were among the disciples and supporters of the faith, by way of encouraging such devotion now.

Among the notabilities honored by church and canonization are Antoninus and Faustina. Of the emperor we have nothing to say, except that it is a pity to degrade a good man's fame by classing him with Christian saints; and of the empress it may be said that she would, if now living, not be welcomed in good society in the church. They tell naughty stories about her, but still she is good material for a saint, having been of high rank, wealthy, proud, beautiful, and "of such is the kingdom" here, whatever it may be "in heaven."

The catacombs of Rome have furnished the means of manufacturing "clouds" of "saints," who are supposed to have been witnesses of the faith in Jesus and martyrs for the sacred cause. The catacombs are a vast labyrinth of passages, three to five feet wide, five to eight feet high, and extending for miles outside the limits of the present city. It is believed they were quarries for material for the ancient city, and afterward used as a cemetery by various peoples—Greeks, Jews, Latins, and strangers—most of which have been

adopted and baptized into the church by modern zealots, who believe by so doing they advance the cause of the church. If the story of the catacombs is received, church history is carried back to A. D. 150; but outside of the church assumptions and inventions there is not a word of proof that there were any Christians in Rome or anywhere else in that age to be buried at all. The whole of the early chronology of the catacombs is an impudent and shameless invention and fraud.

Many fragments of stone slabs were found when the rubbish was cleared out of the catacombs in those parts that are now shown to visitors. To illustrate the system of saint-making, we will suppose the workmen to have found a corner of a slab with the letters L A, the rest being broken off. The ingenious monk now begins his part of the work by saying this is the remaining portion of a slab that once closed the niche containing the body of the saint and martyr Priscilla, and he goes on inventing her biography until he has rung the various changes on the often-used materials—noble birth, wealthy, early vow of chastity, forced marriage to a heathen prince or noble, torture, fortitude, and fidelity to the faith, and final “crowning with martyrdom by beheading,” or some other elegant mode of taking off.

Sometimes the inscriptions in the catacombs are in need of a little baptizing, as, for instance, “Zoa in Pace,” “Dionysius in Pace,” “Procopi in Pace,” etc.; all of which are suggestive of a pagan origin, as also these:

“VIBAS IN PACE, ET PETE PRO NOBIS;”
 (“*Mayest thou live in peace and pray for us.*”)

“PETE PRO PARENTES TVOS MATRONATA MATRONA

QVE VIXIT AN. I, DI LIL.”
 (“*Pray for your parents, Matronata Matrona, who lived one year and fifty-two days.*”)

Out of this material a whole chapter of saints can be made; with biographies very thrilling and consoling to the faithful now living.

The world has had enough of this sort of saint-making, and is now looking for a new order of saints, not made with hands, but who grow by daily doing good to their fellow-men and to themselves, who regard the family circle as a better heaven than any a celibate priest can invent beyond the grave, and who hold that a suffering soul relieved here and now is worth more in the judgment-scale of humanity than the whole sum of purgatorial services said and sung by thousands of well-paid priests. The only use that will be tolerated for the "saints" of the church in the freethinking age now coming will be such as is given to the hobgoblins and devils of mediæval times, and which are seen in the gargoyle decorations of the cathedrals of Europe. The sooner they are crystallized into such fixtures the better it will be for the poor, mentally-enslaved masses of humanity.

HERETICS AND HERESIES OF THE CHURCH.

Some one in defining the meaning of the term "orthodoxy" does it in this way: "*Orthodoxy* is my doxy, *heterodoxy* is your doxy." It was much on the same principle that orthodoxy and heterodoxy were settled in the early centuries of the church. The Christian system was still very young when quarrels arose as to matters of faith, as they did also as to matters of power and control. The most fierce and bitter contentions grew up as to which was the true gospel, as it descended from Jesus and the apostles, and which the false. The two or more parties in the fight equally contended that they were in the right and that it was they who had the truth, and they only. The dispute was often long and tedious and the scales sometimes seemed about equally balanced, and for years it could hardly be told which side would triumph. Success was what settled it. The victor had the right, and the defeated party must go to the wall. It mattered little how the victory was won, so it was won. The winner was the orthodox, the loser the heretic; the victor was on the side of God and his Son, and had the truth; the loser was a patron of the devil, and had naught but falsehood in his possession. That was about the way doctrinal quarrels were settled. All dissenters

against the party in power, of course, are heretics. However often the rule might change, the triumphant party for the time being has the truth, and that is the orthodox.

These Christian dissensions and religious fights began early and have been numerous. "The learned have reckoned upward of ninety different dissensions which arose in the first three centuries. Nor does it appear that even the most early and primitive preachers of Christianity were able to keep the telling of the Christian story in their own hands, or to provide any sort of security for having it told in the same way. St. Paul accuses St. Peter of wilfully corrupting the Gospel of Christ (Gal. ii, 14; Acts xv, 39; Phil. iii, 2; Phil. i, 15, etc.), and (whatever we may feel ourselves bound to think of himself) makes no mincing of the matter in telling us that the other apostles were 'false apostles, deceitful workers, dogs, and liars, and that they preached Christ out of envy and strife'" (1 John iv, 3).

It should be borne in mind that the epistles ascribed to John were written a long time before either of the four gospels were penned, and it seems there were persons possessing the Christian faith who considered that a belief that such a person as Jesus Christ had ever existed was no part of that faith, and that he was denied to have had any real existence as a man, or *to have come in the flesh*, at the time when, if that fact could have been established, there would have been no occasion to make a virtue of any man's faith; the matter could at once have been settled forever on a basis of certainty that would have prevented the power of the mind to conceive a doubt upon the subject.

In making a candid examination of this subject Taylor says: "The very earliest Christian writings that have come down to us are of a controversial character and written in attempted refutation of heresies. These heresies must therefore have been of so much earlier date and prior prevalence; they could not have been considered of sufficient consequence to have called (as they seem to have done) for the entire devotion and enthusiastic zeal of the orthodox party to extirpate, or keep them under, if they had not acquired deep root and become of serious notoriety—an inference which leads

directly to the conclusion that they were of anterior origination to any date that has hitherto been ascribed to the gospel history. When the simple fact of the existence of such a man as Jesus Christ is questioned, it is usual for the modern advocates of Christianity to shelter themselves from all contemplation of the historical difficulties of the case by assuming his existence to be incontrovertible, and that nothing short of idiocy of understanding, or an intention to irritate and annoy rather than either to seek or to communicate information, could prompt a man to moot a doubt on the subject; nor is it in the power of language to exceed the airs of insolence and domination which even our Unitarian theologians assume to cloak over their inability to give satisfaction on this, the simplest and prime position of the case, by taking it for granted, forsooth, that none but reckless desperates, or downright fools, could have held the human existence of Christ as problematical."

It is a common argument with the defenders of Christianity to insist that the world ought to accept the existence of Jesus, though no one has seen him, the same as the existence of Cæsar, Alexander the Great, Napoleon Bonaparte, and George Washington is accepted by myriads who never saw them. The difference is here, there is nothing improbable or impossible connected with the existence of these, and the belief that they once lived on the earth does not require violence to all one knows of nature's laws. But if it was demanded that we believe that each of these four persons came into the world without being begotten by a natural father, and that they were begotten by a ghost of some kind, we would be fully entitled to doubt the story with all the intelligence we possess. No man is required to believe a natural impossibility, or what he knows to be in opposition to the laws and principles of nature, without the most positive proof to sustain it. Unfortunately we have very little upon which to base a belief that Jesus ever had an existence of any kind, and none at all that he had a supernatural existence, save what some man said some man dreamed, and we do not know whether the man who did the dreaming had an existence, and if he had we do not know that he was a reliable man, and that he also

correctly reported his dream to the scribe who wrote the story, as well as that the story-teller was truthful and conscientious about it and said nothing but what was strictly correct. Probably there was never a story told and believed with such undoubting faith which had so little to rest that faith upon as the story of Jesus' parentage and birth. If a thousand such stories were now told of a girl becoming a mother without the service of one of the male persuasion, not one of them would be believed. But if the tale is located ten or twelve thousand miles away, on the opposite side of the globe, and the affair is dated back two or three thousand years, it seems it can be believed by millions of ordinarily intelligent people, and with all the facility with which a man would roll off a log when asleep.

Tertullian mentioned but two classes of heretics who existed in the time of the apostles, the *Docetæ*, so-called from a Greek word meaning *opinion, suspicion, appearance*, merely, as expressive of their opinion that Christ had existed in appearance only, and not in reality; and the *Ebionites*, so-called from the Hebrew word *Abionim*, in expression of their poverty, ignorance, and vulgarity (Lardner, vol. iv, p. 512). "Docetism," says Lardner, "seems to have derived its origin from the Platonic philosophy, for the followers of this opinion were principally among the higher classes of men, and were chiefly those who had been converted from heathenism to Christianity" (vol. iv, p. 628). To this Taylor adds: "As far, then, as such a question admits of proof, this is absolute proof that no such a person as Jesus Christ ever existed."

HERETICS WHO DENIED CHRIST'S HUMANITY.—It seems that almost all sorts of opinions have been entertained about Jesus; some that he had no humanity, but was merely a spirit, who had no corporeal body; while others believe that he was wholly human, and had no divine nature more than any other human being. "Within the immediate year of the alleged crucifixion of Christ, or sooner than any other account of the matter could have been made known, it was publicly taught that, instead of having been miraculously born, and having passed through the impotence of infancy, boyhood,

and adolescence, he had descended on the banks of the Jordan in the form of perfect manhood; that he had imposed on the senses of his enemies and of his disciples, and that the ministers of Pilate had wasted their impotent rage on an airy phantom" (Syntagma, p. 101). Cotelerius has a strong passage to this effect: "It would be, as it were, to deny that the sun shines at midday to question the fact that this was really the first way in which the gospel story was related." "While the apostles were yet on earth, nay, while the blood of Christ was still recent on Mount Calvary, the body of Christ was asserted to be a mere phantasm" (Cotel. Patres, Apostol., tom. 2, p. 24).

Among the early heretics who held to this opinion may be named the following individuals:

CERDON, who had his sect in Rome, and taught that Jesus never was born, and did not appear in the flesh; and that men only saw him putatively, that is, they fancied they saw him as they would see a shadow, and though he seemed to suffer, he did not suffer at all.

MARCION OF PONTUS, A. D. 127, successor of Cerdon, and himself son of the archbishop of that city. He not only held that Jesus was not born of a virgin, but that he was not born at all, but that the son of God took the exterior form of man, with the necessity of being born and growing up from infancy to manhood. They acknowledged the miracles, the twelve disciples, and all the rest of the gospel story, except that Jesus was not born of a woman, and was not an ordinary human being. His followers were numerous. They led good lives; they suffered persecutions and martyrdom for their belief, and were bitterly opposed by the orthodox Christians.

LEUCIUS, LUCUNUS, SENTITIUS, or LEONIDES, A. D. 143.—Thought also to be the veritable St. Luke. He is charged as being the author of the spurious gospel of Nicodemus, and the acts and journeyings of the apostles. He held that the body of Jesus, when dead, was not substance like ordinary bodies, but could vanish away like a spirit.

APELLES, A. D. 160.—He was a dissenter from the Marcionites; and thus is traced by what degrees the Docetian doctrines were brought into a nearer conformity to the present

type of Christianity, and what was originally romance began to assume a certain resemblance to history. Apelles held that Christ was not an appearance only, but had flesh and blood, not derived from the Virgin Mary. In descending from the supercelestial region he collected or materialized a regular body. After his crucifixion his body ascended and distributed itself through ethereal space, and Christ, in an original, invisible state, sat down at the right hand of God.

FAUSTUS was a learned and intelligent Manichean. He directly charged the orthodox party with having egregiously falsified the gospels, and insisted that Christ was not born of a woman, and was not an ordinary human being.

HERETICS WHO DENIED CHRIST'S DIVINITY.—Those who denied the humanity of Christ were the earlier class of professing Christians, and not only first in order of time, as Taylor says, but in dignity of character, in intelligence, and in moral influence; those who denied the *divinity* were second, and in every sense a less philosophical and less important body. Down the whole stream of time, to the present day, there has been a long succession of heretics whose tenets were the diametrical reverse of those of the more early Christians. From Artemon, Theodotus, Sabellus, Paul of Samosta, Marcellius, Photinus, etc., we inherit what has been called the curse of the Unitarian schism, which denies the divinity of Christ as strongly as the earlier Christians denied his humanity, and on this very ground. Whether Christ had divinity or humanity most, has been the field of much bitter contention and bloody war. The unceasing quarrels for centuries upon this unsolved problem was sufficient to make thousands believe there was no Jesus, that he was only a myth. The junction of the two mongrel branches of Christians seems to have been effected in the articles of peace drawn up for the Council of Nice in 325.

The deniers of the humanity of Christ held that the story of him was merely a sublime allegory, or emblematical exhibition of the sufferings and persecutions which the Divine Principle of Reason may be supposed to undergo ere it could establish its *heavenly* kingdom over the understandings and

affections of men. These were the first and most rational Christians, and many fell victims to the sincerity of their faith, not from pagans, but from their Christian brothers with whom they could not agree. As Taylor says, "The allegorical sense may be still traced ; and by changing the name *Jesus* for that of *Reason* the New Testament will acquire a character of comparative dignity and consistency which without that clue to the interpretation of it would be sought for in vain."

HERETICS WHO DENIED CHRIST'S CRUCIFIXION.—The reality of the crucifixion was stoutly denied by many of the immediate successors of the apostles. In the gospel of the apostle Barnabas, a copy of which was seen by Toland, it is explicitly asserted that Jesus Christ was not crucified, but was taken up into the third heaven by the ministry of four angels, Gabriel, Michael, Raphael, and Uriel ; that he should not die till the end of the world, and that it was Judas Iscariot who was crucified. This very likely was the ground of quarrel between Paul and Barnabas, some intimation of which is given in Acts (xv. 39). Paul preached Christ and *him crucified*, while Barnabas preached Christ and him *not crucified*.

The **BASILIDIANS** denied in the very beginning of Christianity that Christ was crucified ; and this form of heresy continued more than six centuries, and it was held that it was Simon of Cyrene that was crucified. There was so much dispute as to who it was that was crucified it is quite probable that those who denied that anybody was crucified were as near right as any.

HERETICS WHO DENIED CHRIST'S RESURRECTION.—There was also a numerous class of persistent unbelievers who from earliest times denied the resurrection of Jesus. Theodoret gives an account of Cerinthus, who was contemporary with the apostle John and his followers, and who held and taught that Christ suffered, was crucified, but that he did not rise from the tomb, and will not till the general resurrection. Among the prominent Christian sects who denied the resurrection of Jesus are the Cerinthians, the Marcionites, the

Valentinians, the Markosians, the Cerdonians, Bardisanites, the Origenists, the Hierakites, and the Manichees.

Upon this form of heresy Taylor remarks thus: "As the whole amount of internal evidence for the alleged fact of the gospel, it may then be fairly stated in contravention of the clear understanding of the mystical nature of the whole mythos, which those who bear the brand of slavery have given us, while a thousand expressions in the writings of the orthodox themselves confirm that understanding; not so much as any two continuous sentences can be adduced from any pen that wrote within a hundred years of the supposed death and resurrection of Christ, which are such as any writer would have written had he himself believed that such events really occurred" (Diegesis, p. 375).

THE MANICHEANS were originally the disciples and followers of a Persian named Manes or Mani, who asserted the existence of two opposite supreme eternal powers or principles—one of darkness and evil, the other of light and goodness. To the former he ascribed the Old Testament and Judaism; to the latter the gospel. He also represented our bodies as the work of the evil principle; and that it was to deliver our souls, the offspring of the good principle, from their bondage to our bodies that Christ was sent and the spirit also. The substance and essence of the gospel he placed in the struggle after the light, and against the darkness; and the victory through Christ and the comforter. His followers spread far and wide through Christendom, and in spite of anathemas, public and private, under the one or other name persistently maintained their ground for centuries and received the same persecution showered upon the heads of all heretics.

AMMONIUS SACCAS was a wild enthusiastic philosopher of Alexandria, and imbibed singular notions about matter and spirit, human souls, demons, etc. He adopted with such dexterity the doctrines of the pagan philosophy as to appear a Christian to Christians and a pagan to pagans. Indeed there was so little difference between them that it is not strange that a man was able to pass himself off as either or both. He maintained that the great principle of all philosophical and

religious truth was to be found equally in all sects, differing only in their modes of expression. The followers of Saccas became numerous in the second century, and the dissension which grew up between them and the other sects laid the foundation for a long war between faith and reason, which has even come down to our own times. (Ecclesiastical Researches, p. 31)

ARIUS was a Cyrenian, and lived in the beginning of the fourth century. He was a presbyter in Alexandria and became the founder of the most persistent school of heresy that has troubled the church—the great conflict between the Trinitarians and Unitarians. He held as an article of faith what was generally taught in the philosophical school of Alexandria. He was bitterly opposed by the dealectics of the bishops, and especially by Athanasius, bishop or patriarch of Alexandria. The great point of difference between the disciples of Arius and Athanasius was the character and nature of the Son in the holy Trinity. Arius took the ground that there was a time when, from the very nature of the sonship, the Son did not exist, and a time when he commenced to be. He considered it an absolute necessity that the father must be older than the son. This lowering of the age and character of “the Redeemer” could not be brooked by Athanasius and his adherents. The arguments, quarrels, and debates that grew out of the question were interminable and relentless. The Alexandrians, little anticipating the serious and enduring results soon to arise, amused themselves with almost irreverent levity by theatrical representations on the stage. In the theater of Alexandria, as Prof. Draper insists, “many of the corruptions of Christianity originated. The passions of the two parties were aroused. The Jews and pagans, of whom the town was full, exasperated them by their mocking derision. The dissension spread; the whole country became convulsed. In the hot climate of Africa theological controversy soon ripened into political disturbance. In all Egypt there was not a Christian man and not a woman who did not proceed to settle the nature of the unity of God.” The tumult rose to such a pitch that it became necessary for the Emperor Constantine to interfere. Hosius,

bishop of Cordova, was sent to quell the disturbance, but proved inadequate to the undertaking. The quarrel still raged, which resulted in the call for the council in Nicea, in 325. This council attempted to settle the contention by condemning Arius and his doctrine. As an orthodox tenet of faith the Son was authoritatively declared to be of the same substance with the father. The remedy, however, was only temporizing and ambiguous. The question really was settled by evading it, and Constantine enforced the decision by banishing Arius.

Arius complained bitterly at the treatment he received. He said piteously, "I am persecuted because I have taught that the son of God had a beginning and the father had not." Constantine at first admitted that the position of Arius was self-evident, that the son must be younger than the father; but his court and many influential persons taking side against Arius, he did also, as a matter of policy, denouncing him as "the image of the devil." So great was the growing opposition that at the Nicean council the Athanasian Creed was adopted, and Arius and his doctrines were anathematized in the strongest terms. The Nicean creed differed in some particulars from that now current under that title. Among other things the fatal and final clause has been dropped. Thus it ran: "The Holy Catholic and Apostolic church anathematizes those who say that there was a time when the Son of God was not, and that before he was begotten he was not; and that he was made out of nothing, or out of another substance or essence, and is created or changeable or altered." Constantine executed the severest measures against Arius, and it was decreed that any one having a book by Arius and did not burn it should be put to death.

In less than ten years, however, Constantine was found agreeing again with Arius. The latter was invited to Constantinople, and the emperor ordered Bishop Alexander to receive Arius with respect; but Arius was poisoned, and he died in a few hours. But his death did not allay the fury of the warfare; the opposition was not assuaged. The sons and successors of Constantine set an example in violence in these disputes, and, until the barbarians burst in upon the empire,

the fourth century wore away in theological feuds. Even the populace, scarcely emerged from paganism, set itself up for a judge on questions from their very nature incapable of being solved. Orthodoxy triumphed, because it was more in unison with the present necessity of the court, while asserting the predominance of Christianity, to offend, as little as might be, pagan authority. Constantius attempted to take sides with Arius. Athanasius took opposite ground against the emperor. Like his father, Constantius pretended to see a celestial vision, but as he was an Arian the orthodox rejected, without scruple, his supernatural authority.

Professor Draper again says: "The horrible bloodshed and murders attending these quarrels in the great cities, and private life of both high and low degree, clearly showed that Christianity, through its union with politics, had fallen into such a state that it could no longer control the passions of men. The personal history of the sons of Constantine is an awful relation of family murders. Religion had disappeared, and theology had come in its stead. Even theology had gone mad. But in the midst of these disputes worldly interests were steadily kept in view. At the council of Ariminum, A. D. 359, an attempt was made to have the lands belonging to the churches exempt from all taxation; but to his credit the emperor steadfastly refused. Macedonius, the bishop of Constantinople, who had passed over the slaughtered bodies of three thousand people to take possession of his episcopal throne, exceeded even Arius himself in heresy by not only asserting the inferiority of the son to the father, but by absolutely denying the divinity of the Holy Ghost" (*Intellectual Development of Europe*, p. 214).

PELAGIUS AND PELAGIANISM.—About the year 400 Pelagius, a British monk, traveled through western Europe and northern Africa, teaching that Adam was by nature mortal, and that if he had not sinned he would have died; that the consequences of his sin were confined to himself, and did not affect his posterity; that the new-born infants are in the same condition as Adam before his fall, etc. St. Augustine repelled and denounced him, as also did Jerome from his cell in Palestine. Pelagius insisted that it is not the mere act of baptiz-

ing by water that washes away sin, but that it can only be removed by good works. He was summoned for trial before the synod at Diospolis, where he was unexpectedly acquitted. Pope Innocent I. decided in favor of Augustine and the African bishops, but he soon dying, his successor, Zosimus, annulled his judgment, and declared Pelagius to be orthodox. The African bishops, however, induced the emperor to denounce Pelagius as a heretic. The vacillating papacy was not yet strong enough to remain unmoved in the position it saw fit to take.

NESTORIUS AND NESTORIANISM.—Soon after the subsidence of Pelagianism, Nestorius, bishop of Antioch, came out with his heresy. He attempted to distinguish between the divine and human nature of Christ. He held that they had become too much confounded, and that *the God* ought to be kept separate from *the man*. It followed that the Virgin Mary should not be regarded as the "Mother of God, but only the mother of Christ—the God-Man." Made bishop of Constantinople by the Emperor Theodosius the younger, in 427, Nestorius was quickly plunged by the intrigues of a disappointed faction into disputes with the populace. In his eloquent preaching of the Everlasting God he would say: "And can this God have a mother? The heathen notion of a God born of a mortal mother is directly confuted by St. Paul, who declares the Lord to be without father and without mother. Could a creature bear the uncreated?" He held that what was born of Mary was human, to which the divine was afterward added. The monks in the vicinity of Alexandria at once raised an outcry at this, and Cyril, bishop of Alexandria heartily joined them, for he had an ill-concealed desire to humble the bishop of Constantinople. Sermons, addresses, epistles, were forthcoming in great numbers.

Instigated by the monks of Alexandria, the monks of Constantinople took up arms in behalf of the "Mother of God." Rome was turned to as an arbiter. A synod was called by Pope Celestine. The bishop of Constantinople was ordered to recant or hold himself under excommunication. Nestorius, feeling strong in his position with the emperor, refused and excommunicated Bishop Cyril, and the emperor

summoned a council at Ephesus, and thither Nestorius repaired with sixteen bishops and some of the city populace. Cyril appeared with fifty bishops, besides a rabble of sailors, bath-men, and women of the lower sort. The commissioner from the emperor had much difficulty in preventing open fighting and the most tumultuous conduct. The rescript was fraudulently read before the arrival of the Syrian bishops. In one day the matter was completed. The Virgin's party triumphed. Nestorius was defeated and deposed. Upon the arrival of the ecclesiastics from Syria an indignation meeting was held. A riot with much bloodshed occurred in the Cathedral of St. John. The emperor was under the necessity of interfering to stop the flow of blood between these loving Christians. Court intrigue seemed to decide the matter. The sister of the emperor was afterward celebrated by the Alexandrian party as having been the cause of the defeat of Nestorius. "The Holy Virgin of the Court of Heaven had found an ally of her own sex in the holy virgin of the emperor's court." Nestorius, by means of Alexandrian influence and gold, was abandoned by the court and banished to an African oasis. An interesting statement is related about his blasphemous tongue being devoured by worms, and that from the heat of the desert he emigrated to higher heats of hell.

THE EUTYCHIAN HERESY arose from the affair of Eutyches, the archimandrite of a convent of monks at Constantinople. He had been a leader in the Nestorian riots and in subsequent troubles. He was charged before a synod in his own city with denying the two natures of Christ—of saying if there must be two natures there must also be two sons. He was convicted, and sentence of excommunication passed upon him. On his condemnation Eutyches appealed to the emperor, who summoned, at the instigation of a eunuch connected with his court, a council to meet at Ephesus. This was the celebrated "Robber Synod," as it was termed. Its decision was in favor of the orthodoxy of Eutyches, and ordered his restoration, deposing the bishop of Constantinople, Flavianus, his rival, and who at the synod had been his judge, and also Eusebius, who had been his accuser. A disgraceful riot took place on this occasion, in which the

bishop of Constantinople was absolutely murdered by his brother Barsumas, bishop of Alexandria, amid cries of "Kill him! kill him!" The Italian legates found great difficulty in getting away in safety. Can it be possible that the religion of Jesus should lead to such bloody business as this?

The further heresies, further rivalries, contentions, and quarrels between Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome, must be passed over for the present. But there were enough of these disgraceful quarrels in all conscience. Had they been pirates or robbers they could scarcely have shown more hate, vindictiveness, and bloodthirstiness.

INCIDENTS IN CHURCH HISTORY.

It is not intended here to give in detail or even scarcely to allude to the many events which took place in the church during more than a thousand years. The prescribed limits of this work have already been reached, and much that might be interesting to the reader, touching the system of Christianity, will necessarily have to be passed over in silence. Among such incidents as will have to be left unnoticed are the peculiarities of pontifical power and intrigue, the fall of Rome, the spread of Christianity among the barbarians, the accusations of pagans against Christians, the growth of bigotry and superstition, the fanaticism of prominent Christians, the responsibility of the clergy for the vices of the church, the introduction of Patristicism, Christian and pagan quarrels, destruction of the Alexandrian library, the increase of debased ideas, the corruptions of the Christian system, the deeds of Charles Martel, the epoch of Pepin, the career of tyrannies, and proselytings of Charlemagne, etc. Yes, all these and many more subjects must be left untouched. If it was the whole intent to paint Christianity in black colors, there is much that occurred in medieval times, all along through the dark ages, that could be related that must now be passed in silence.

ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH.

Some allusion has already been made to two or three of the councils that were called in the early Christian centuries, but

it is well to recall them compactly together, giving the time when held and the nature of the business performed. Councils were divided into general and particular. Particular councils were of three kinds—national, convoked by the prince, the patriarch, or primate; provincial, assembled by the metropolitan or archbishop; and diocesan, or synods held by each bishop.

1. THE COUNCIL OF NICE, A. D. 325, was called together by the Emperor Constantine; the object was to settle the bitter controversy which grew up in consequence of the teachings of Arius and the opposition from Athanasius. Thus two priests, getting into a quarrel as to whether Jesus was creature or creator, and Constantine wishing to have it properly settled, called together his bishops from all parts of Christendom to the number of two thousand and forty-eight. The emperor being anxious to have the knotty question of whether Jesus was of the same age as his father duly and amicably settled, was angered to find the bishops were greatly divided in their opinions, and his patience was greatly exhausted in listening to their violent harangues and intemperate speeches. It is said the report of their speeches amounted to forty volumes. It has been stated by an ancient writer that the members of the council quarreled so continuously that Constantine sent some seventeen hundred of them home about their business, leaving quite enough to quarrel over the mythical problem. Three hundred and eighteen members are said to have given their signatures that they believed the son to be consubstantial with the father, but though the question seemed to be decidedly settled, it did not, as we have seen, stay settled; but the great mystery whether Jesus was as old as his father remained undecided for centuries.

Another thing which this council attempted to attend to was the divine character of the books to compose the New Testament canon. They hit upon the ingenious method of settling this vexed question by placing the hundreds of spurious and genuine gospels and epistles under the communion table, and then, by prayer, causing those divinely-inspired to jump of themselves upon the table, while the cheats and frauds remained upon the floor. Surely none but inspired

men could have hit upon such a lucky expedient. How else could they ever have told which was true and which false?

Two other councils were convened by Constantine—one at Rimini, consisting of four hundred bishops, the other at Selucia, with one hundred and fifty bishops. The latter, after long debates, rejected the term *consubstantial*, it having also been already condemned in a council at Antioch. These councils were recognized only by the Socinians, and were not considered ecumenical councils.

The Nicene fathers had been so busy attending to the age of the son as compared with the father that they rather neglected the Holy Ghost, passing him by almost with contempt, merely saying, "We also believe in the Holy Ghost." This slight, however, was subsequently atoned for in a general council held at Constantinople in 381 by Theodosius. The Holy Ghost was there declared to be the Lord and giver of life, proceeding from the father, who, with the father and the son, is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. Afterward the Latin church would have it that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the son as well as the father.

As observed, the synods and councils of the church have been almost without number; but the following are the principal. The first four are extremely mythical:

1. Council of the Apostles concerning circumcision, A. D. 47.
2. Council of the Apostles to elect Simeon Cleophas twenty-second bishop of Jerusalem, to succeed Janus, A. D. 66.
3. Council in which the apostolic canons are pretended to have been agreed on, A. D. 70.
4. Council of Ephesus, for the reformation of the churches and consecration of bishops, at which John the Evangelist was present, A. D. 99.
5. The Council of Ancyra, in Galatia, to suppress the errors of Montanus, A. D. 163.
6. Councils in France and Asia against the heresy of Montanus, A. D. 179.
7. Council at Rome, touching the celebration of Easter. Victor, bishop of Rome, excommunicated all the Eastern churches for their differences upon this subject, A. D. 193.

8. Fabianus, pope of Rome, claimed to be miraculously elected by the Holy Ghost perching upon his head in the shape of a dove; in synod denounced the schism of Novatus, A. D. 246.

9. Council of Carthage, under its president, Cyprian, fell into the heresy of re-baptizing heretics, A. D. 254.

10. First and second council of Antioch, for the condemnation of and degradation of its bishop, Paul of Samosata, A. D. 271.

11. Grand council of three hundred bishops and thirty priests, at Sinuessa, where Marcellinus, bishop of Rome, was condemned for denying Christ and sacrificing to idols, A. D. 295.

12. Council of Ancyra, where such as sacrificed to idols were allowed to be received under certain conditions, and deacons who could not contain were suffered to marry, A. D. 307.

13. Grand Council of Nice, in Bithynia, which settled the age and status of Christ, A. D. 325.

14. Council of Laodicea, settled upon the books of the New Testament canon, not including Revelations, A. D. 368.

15. First Council at Constantinople, 381.

16. Third Council of Carthage. The New Testament canon considered, reversing some of the decisions of the Council of Laodicea, 397.

17. Council of Chalcedon. The New Testament was here accepted as a divine guide, 451.

18. Second Council of Constantinople, 553.

19. Third Constantinople, 680.

20. Second Nicæan, 787.

21. Fourth Constantinople, 869.

22. First of Lateran, 1123.

23. Second of Lateran, 1139.

24. Third of Lateran, 1179.

25. Fourth of Lateran, 1215.

26. First of Lyons, 1245.

27. Second of Lyons, 1274.

28. Council of Vienna, 1311.

29. Constance, 1414-1418.

30. Basle, 1431.
31. Fifth of Lateran, 1512-1517.
32. Trent, 1545-1563.
33. Ecumenical Council of Rome, 1854.
34. Council of the Vatican, 1870.

The latter twenty were all general, or ecumenical, councils, the entire church in all parts of the world being represented. Besides these there were great numbers of particular or partial councils convened for special purposes. As a specimen of the kind of decisions arrived at in some of these priestly gatherings, the following is presented as having been passed by a council held at Macon: "Whenever a layman meet a priest or a deacon on the road he shall offer him his arm; and if the priest and layman are both on horseback, the layman shall stop and salute the priest reverently; and if the priest be on foot and the layman on horseback, the layman shall dismount, and shall not mount again until the ecclesiastic is at a certain distance—all on pain of interdiction for as long a time as it shall please the metropolitan."

Such an enactment as the foregoing does not, in the light of modern civilization and intelligence, fully substantiate the old claim of the church that the councils of bishops were specially presided over by the Holy Ghost, and that for this reason their decisions were necessarily infallible. It was held that the salvation of the soul was imperiled to even doubt the wisdom and righteousness of the decrees and decisions of the councils. The eminent, but rather indolent, uncleanly, and unenterprising saint who led a very monotonous life on the top of a pillar, Simon Stylites, is reported as saying: "In my declared attachment to the faith of the six hundred and thirty holy Fathers assembled at Chalcedon, I take my stand upon the actual revelation of the Holy Spirit. If the Savior is present among two or three gathered together in his name, it is inconceivable that among holy Fathers as numerous and eminent the Holy Spirit should not be eminent throughout." Gregory the Great, patriarch of Rome, in the sixth century, alluding to the Council of Nice, which settled the equality of the Son with the Father; to the Council of Constantinople, which settled the equality of the Holy Ghost with both; and

to the Councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon, which settled the dispute concerning the divine and human nature in Christ, says, "I believe as fully and fervently in the four councils as I do in the four gospels." It will be remembered that the good St. Gregory, bishop of Nazianzen, said of councils, that he "fled from all assemblies of bishops, because he never saw a good and happy end of any council, but that they did rather increase than lessen the evils, and that love of contention and ambition always overcomes their reason." On another occasion he reiterated his determination of never going to another council, "because nothing is to be heard there but geese and cranes, who fight without understanding one another." He said, "I am weary of struggling with holy bishops whose jealousies render harmony impossible, and who make light of the interests of the faith in pursuit of their own quarrels." "They fight and run into schism, and divide the whole world for the sake of thrones. The Trinity is a mere pretext for their wrangling; the true cause being an incredible spirit of hatred."

The spirit manifested at these councils was certainly the reverse of *holy* and *angelic*, and if the conduct of their members is to be taken as an indication of what the controlling spirit of the Holy Ghost is, it certainly is not calculated to raise the character of that mythical personage very highly in our estimation. At the great Council of Nice many of the members presented to the Emperor Constantine strong letters of accusation against other members, nearly all showing the greatest personal animosity and hatred. Constantine, in his zeal to preserve the appearance of respectability and to save the council from falling into deep reproach, burned those slanderous and acrimonious documents, and urged the bishops to forbearance and concession. One historian, in speaking of the discussions in that council, compares it to a battle in the night, when men are unable to discern who or on which side they are fighting. At the Council of Ephesus, after much quarreling, the parties came to blows, and the cathedral in which the council was held was stained with blood, and the streets were kept in continual tumult. It was here that Dioscurus, patriarch of Alexandria, is said to have beat and

kicked Flavianus, patriarch of Constantinople, to such a degree that he died. The council took the ground that Christ had but one nature; if they found it, it must be admitted it was a bad one. The ministers of the council had to be dispersed on one occasion by the civil authorities. When one of the bishops in debate attempted to show, in what he meant as a conciliatory manner, what he thought about Christ having two natures, many voices vociferated, "Burn him alive! Let him be cut asunder as he has sundered Christ." The Council of Chalcedon, held not long after, refused the decision of the Second Council of Ephesus, which was afterward called "the Synod of Robbers" and "the Robber Council."

The historian Ammianus, in speaking of the great expense attendant upon the councils, said: "The highways are covered with troops of bishops galloping from every side to the assemblies called synods. And while they labor to reduce the whole sect to their own particular opinions, the public establishment of post horses is almost ruined by their frequent and hurried journeys." Hilary, bishop of Poitiers, thus laments the perpetual discord: "It is a thing equally deplorable and dangerous that there are as many creeds as opinions among men, as many doctrines as inclinations, and as many sources of blasphemy as there are faults among us, because we make creeds arbitrarily, and explain them as arbitrarily. The Homousian is rejected and received and explained away by successive synods. The partial or complete resemblance of the father and the son is a subject of dispute for these unhappy times. Every year, nay, every moon, we make new creeds to describe invisible mysteries. We repent of what we have done; we defend those who repent; we anathematize those whom we have defended. We either condemn the doctrine of others in ourselves, or our own doctrine in that of others. Thus reciprocally tearing each other in pieces, we have been the cause of each other's ruin." He says again: "The East and the West are in a perpetual state of restlessness and disturbance. Deserting our spiritual charges, abandoning the people of God, neglecting the preaching of the gospel, we are hurried about from place to place, often to a great distance, some of us infirm with age or feeble with ill health, sometimes obliged to

leave our sick brethren on the road. The whole administration of the empire, the emperor himself, the tribunes and the commanders, at this fearful crisis, are occupied with the lives and condition of the bishops. The people are by no means unconcerned. The whole brotherhood watches in anxious suspense the result of these troubles. The public post horses are worn out with our journeyings."

The controversies in the councils were often interrupted with personal quarrels and hates, arising from jealousy and a spirit of competition. The patriarchs of Rome and Constantinople were always rivals and enemies. They were sure to take opposite sides on all questions, and both equally controlled by the Holy Ghost. A similar state of feeling existed between Alexandria and Constantinople; their contentions were fierce and unrelenting. The soldiers of contending armies could scarcely feel greater hatred toward each other. These were the kind of men who claimed to be under the influence of the Holy Ghost, and to be able to truthfully decide the intricate mysteries of godliness. These were the men who felt themselves able to decide whether God was any younger than his son, and whether the son was as old or older than the father; whether the Holy Ghost was equally of the Father and the Son, or whether he was of the Father and *proceeded* from the Son; whether the Virgin Mary was the mother of God, who thousands of years earlier had created the world and all else besides, and later on, created the Virgin herself. What a remarkable woman Mary must have been to be able to give birth to a God thousands of years older than herself, and thus become the parent of her own parent. These were the men capable of pronouncing Jesus *consubstantial* with the Father—very God of very God—and that bread and wine were transubstantiated into his body and blood, and really, virtually, and truly became his flesh. It is almost confusing to the human intellect to think over what deep and abstruse subjects these councils have deliberated upon, and the ridiculous, most absurd, questions they have presumed to discuss and decide.

After a time, however, when the pope of Rome had become more powerful, the decisions of the councils became less

potent and imperative. As Rome grew stronger the outside bishops grew weaker, and Rome pronounced the decisions of the councils not infallible until they had received the sanction of the pope.

ARROGANCE OF BISHOPS.

The effect of these councils has been to increase the pride, conceit, and self-importance of the bishops. Constantine, in the great Council of Nice, had pretended to a great degree of humility, and took a seat lower than the bishops, professing it was not for him to assume authority superior to theirs. This consideration which the emperor accorded to them they afterward claimed as their right, and no men in the world have been more conceited, supercilious, arrogant, and dictatorial. The son and successor of Constantine was denounced by bishops as a heretic, and was excluded from the councils on the ground that no layman, even though an emperor, had any right to be present at the discussions of bishops. Bishops afterward refused the sacrament to the Emperor Valerius, because they thought his theological belief was not quite in accordance with their standard. The Emperor Theodosius attempted to enter within the sacred inclosure of the church of Milan when Ambrose haughtily indicated by a gesture that the emperor must take a lower seat with the laity. The emperor had the grace to take the place assigned him, and after that even the deacons held themselves superior to their emperor in spiritual power. When messengers from the Arian Empress Justina and her son accused Ambrose of tyranny in not allowing the imperial family one church in Milan for their own mode of worship, he proudly replied: "In ancient times priests *bestowed* empire; they did not condescend to *assume* it. Kings have desired to be priests rather than priests to be kings."

When Athanasius returned from exile, the people of Alexandria waved incense before him as he passed through the streets. Chrysostom says when the bishop of Antioch came to Constantinople the multitude went out to meet him, and as many as could came and kissed his hands and feet. Jerome

says the populace sometimes sang hosannas to their bishop as they had done to Christ. Paul of Samosata was displeased when he entered a church if the audience did not receive him with applause, and the hosannas, introduced as an occasional salutation to the bishops, became a prominent part of the ceremonial of the church. Ambrose says that kings and princes did not disdain to bow their necks to the knees of the priests and kiss their hands, and it is recorded that this was the customary respect paid to himself.

The universal adulation and homage to bishops and priests, though grounded in religious reverence, was not unmingled with selfish policy and fear of their great authority in spiritual and temporal concerns. Of all the power lodged in their hands none was more dreaded than excommunication. In the early times a person guilty of misconduct was expelled from the church by vote of the community to which he belonged; but this power steadily passed from the people into the hands of bishops, and as years sped on the forms increased in severity. The Christians vied with the most cruel pagan nations, including the Druids, in the severity of their forms of excommunication. Athanasius excommunicated one of the priests in his bishopric, and gave orders that the poor man should have neither fire nor water. Synesius excommunicated a magistrate who grievously oppressed the people of Libya, and who could not be persuaded to alter his despotic course. At length Synesius expelled him from the church, and issued orders to all churches, on pain of being considered guilty of schism, not to allow him to partake of the sacrament, to hear prayers, to attend worship, or even to be buried with any Christian ceremonies. Private citizens were required to exclude him from their tables and their houses, on pain of themselves being excluded from all religious privileges. His accomplices and their wives and children were also included in the sentence, though they had no participation in the crime.

In the primitive days of Christianity those who were guilty of misconduct confessed their wrong-doing before the full congregation and were publicly prayed for. But in the fifth century the bishop of Rome—the pope—substituted the cus-

tom of private confession to the priests, which had the tendency to greatly increase their power, as they had the right to prescribe such penance as they pleased.

HERMITS AND MONKS.

An account of this impracticable, useless class of men in Hindostan, Thibet, and Egypt was given in the first volume of this work. It will not be forgotten that those recluses had their origin in paganism, and that their mode of life and their supposed purity were miserable conceptions which Christianity borrowed from the heathens. The Jews also had similar orders; including the Nazarites and Essenes. Egypt had her Gymnosophists and Therapeuts. The latter were an ancient sect in the time of Philo, who wrote about them; while Eusebius, it will be remembered, insisted that they were identical with Christians, and that the sacred writings were the gospels and epistles of the latter.

The most noted Christian hermits were Paul the Hermit, Anthony, Paul the Simple, Helarion, Martin, and some others. These had numerous admirers among the superstitious devotees of the church, and it was believed of them that they were far more holy than other people, and that they performed astonishing miracles; all of which, however, shows how easy and willing people are to be gulled and imposed upon.

MONASTERIES.—Anchorites and recluses have abounded in nearly all the ancient religions of the world. We see that this was particularly the case in India, Thibet, and Egypt; and monasteries abounded there, and are still found in great numbers. There can be no doubt but what the habit of monastic life was borrowed by Christians from pagan religions. The copy of Christian monasticism was so near like the original as to leave no doubt upon that subject; besides, it does not appear that either Christ or his disciples ever instituted anything of the kind.

The first Christian monastery was erected on the island of Tabenna, in the Nile. Pachomius, the founder, an Egyptian monk, died in the year 348, and during his lifetime the monks

attached to it numbered three thousand. The order increased so rapidly that in less than a hundred years there were fifty thousand of them. They of course had many good traits. Beggars and travelers invariably received gratuitous food and shelter by calling upon them, as was from time immemorial practiced by the Hindoo monasteries and the lamaseries of Thibet. The monks wore long linen tunics, fastened with a girdle, to which they added a sheepskin cloak in the winter. They usually went barefoot, but sometimes wore wooden sandals to protect them from extreme heat and cold. They lived on bread and water, to which on feast occasions was sometimes added the luxury of a little oil, or salt, an olive, or a fig. They ate in companies of tens, and in perfect silence. They were bound to obey their superiors without remonstrance or question. Each had his separate cell. Every morning, evening, and night the horn as with the Mohammedans, summoned them to prayer. On some occasions portions of scripture were read, but ordinarily no one spoke or sneezed, or sighed or yawned, or even looked up. They took a vow of poverty and lived faithfully up to it, as to all other vows and rules, which were exceedingly strict. The slightest deviation was punished by penance, incarceration, or scourging. A complete suppression of all natural desires and passions was required.

Sometimes their cells were so small that they were compelled to sit doubled up in a most uncomfortable manner. Some exposed themselves to the fury of storms and the heat of the sun, unsheltered in the open air. Some laid in deep caves where not a ray of light could penetrate; some in deep clefts of almost inaccessible rocks. Some in the retired chambers of silent tombs. Some in the dens of wild beasts, and some again in iron cages, with weights hung to their arms or feet. Some retired to districts where no rain fell, and where they could obtain no drink but the dew, which they lapped from the rocks. Some never cut their nails, hair, or beard. Some wore a very coarse garment unwashed until it dropped from them. Others wore only the crudest kind of garments made of barks and leaves. Sleep being a refreshment of the body they regarded as sinful and not to be indulged in. An hour of

unbroken sleep was regarded as sufficient for a night. They were awakened by each other at various hours of the night to engage in prayer and penance. Their food was berries, roots, and vegetables; their only drink water. They often fasted for days together. If by accident or otherwise they looked upon a woman they inflicted upon themselves severe punishment by way of penance for the crime.

Thus these ascetics, hermits, and monks imagined that by living such horrid, senseless, filthy, and wretched lives they were particularly pleasing a just and merciful God, who was made happy by his subjects making themselves most miserable.

NUNS.—In the same way that Christian monks were patterned after the monks of pagan religions, so were Christian nuns a borrowed idea from the virgins of India, Egypt, Greece, and Rome. For thousands of years it has been believed by the devotees of various religions that their gods were most highly pleased with those who denied themselves the pleasures of life, especially those who totally abstained from sexual indulgences. As the vestal virgins of pagan Rome were believed to be holier, purer, and more angelic than other females, so were the virgins of Christian Rome regarded in the same manner. Nor were the latter any more strict than the former. The pagan gods seemed equally implacable in this respect to the Christian God. All seemed to regard it as sinful for mortals to indulge in natural desires and appetites.

The same Pachomius who established monasteries for men, likewise founded separate establishments for women, where sacred vows of celibacy were taken and lived up to. These latter were called nuns, from a Coptic word signifying mother. Women seem quite as emulous of this kind of sanctity as men. The Christian nuns of Egypt alone numbered thirty thousand in the time of St. Jerome. He introduced monasteries and nunneries into the Roman empire. The enthusiasm which he then stirred up in favor of that monastic and celibate life was indeed wonderful. His argument was, "As the Lord had angels to attend upon him in heaven, he ought also have angels devoted to him on earth." This proved very attractive to impressible young maidens, who each felt a great desire to

become the "spouse of Christ." Jerome was doubtless very skilful in manipulating his seductive arguments, giving all the glowing descriptions of the bridegroom in the Song of Solomon; and if he had been painting earthly love with a free pen some of his pictures could scarcely have been more impassioned. This mixing earth and heaven in his fervid appeals won marvelously upon the minds of susceptible young women and girls. They took kindly to the idea of becoming spiritual brides. Thousands of the young, the beautiful, and even the wealthy, renounced the world and its pleasures, assumed coarse garments, and devoted themselves to poverty, chastity, and obedience. Ambrose had similar success in his diocese. Many parents exerted themselves to the utmost to keep their daughters away from the influence of his eloquence lest he should induce them to become nuns.

An instance of Jerome's power of persuasion over those who listened to him is related in this manner: Among his most distinguished converts at Rome were the Widow Paula and her daughter Eustochium, descendants of the Scipios and Gracchi. Paula impoverished her own family to bestow her great wealth upon the church. The enemies of Jerome attributed his great influence over them to human love. He admitted that both of the ladies were deeply attached to him, but denied that he ever made any base or selfish use of his influence. They left kindred, friends, and country, and accompanied by a number of women who were excited by a similar religious enthusiasm, they joined Jerome and a band of monks in a pilgrimage to Bethlehem. There Paula built and endowed a monastery and two nunneries. Jerome presided over the first, and herself and Eustochium over the others. When she left Rome a younger daughter and a little son watched her departure with looks of solemn entreaty. But without waiting to take a farewell glance she raised her tearless eyes to heaven and went forth to the Holy Land—a sad instance, indeed, of the baleful influence which an unreasoning religious frenzy has upon human happiness and the welfare of the people in this life. Poor Paula never realized the expectations which Jerome had raised in her sensitive, enthusiastic, confiding nature. He eulogised her as exhibiting the highest

degree of self-denying piety ; but of what avail was all her self-denial ? What did she gain by the abandonment of home, the forsaking of children and friends, to reach a state of poverty in a desolate, forsaken country far from her own land ? She died in her nunnery, with not a farthing left for herself and daughter. Even though the church now enrolls her name among its lengthy catalogue of saints, is it really any compensation for the wretchedness which she unnecessarily brought upon herself ?

Jerome called monks and nuns "the precious gems and flowers of the church," and said "marriage replenishes the earth but virginity peoples heaven." A religion that inculcates that doctrine and induces that kind of useless life cannot be justly called a benefit to mankind. He also said, "There must be vessels of wood and of earth, as well as of gold and of silver." Chrysostom said : "Transport yourself in imagination into Egypt. You will there see a new paradise, more beautiful than the richest gardens ; innumerable troops of angels of human forms ; entire nations of martyrs and virgins. There the weaker sex rival the most fervent solitaires in their virtues. A holy phalanx of pious Amazons, not armed, as of old, with bucklers and javelins, keep themselves continually on their guard against an enemy the most subtle and dangerous of any." "It is a life worthy of heaven, and not inferior to that of angels."

Such were the arguments employed to induce thoughtless young people to do violence to the highest elements of their natures ; and in place of a rational, practical, useful life to lead one of uselessness, wretchedness, and woe. And who was benefited by it all ?

CHURCHES, IMAGES, ETC.

In the early days of Christianity its devotees met at each other's houses, in groves, and in the open air, to read portions of their sacred literature and to speak to each other about the religion they had espoused, with prayer and such other devotional exercises as made up their worship ; but as their numbers and wealth increased they erected chapels and churches

in cities and villages. The churches erected were modeled more or less after the pagan temples, and like them they all faced the rising sun. At first plainness was the style, but images, paintings, and decorations were soon introduced. These were objected to by some of the fathers, but without much avail. Eusebius declared strongly against images, and caused persons in his bishopric who had small images representing Christ, Paul, etc., to abandon them. It is supposed it began to be customary to paint churches with emblems about the close of the third century. The cross was the most common emblem; sometimes a lamb with a cross, or a lamb standing on a mound, whence four rivers—the four gospels—flowed forth. An anchor represented faith and hope. The old Hindoo emblem of a triangle, with an eye in the center, representing the trinity, was used; in fact, all the emblems and symbols used by the early Christians were borrowed from their pagan predecessors.

At the commencement of the fourth century the council at Elvira forbade objects of worship being painted on the walls. After the time of Constantine churches increased rapidly in numbers and magnificence. The columns and pavements were of fine polished marble. They contained shrines of saints and martyrs—in place of the numerous pagan gods—set with precious stones, and their relics were covered with rich embroidery, or cloth of gold, before which lamps of gold or silver were continually burning. The smoke of frankincense, which for ages had filled the temples of India, Chaldea, Egypt, Jerusalem, Greece, and Rome, now floated round the Christian altars. Marble basins contained holy water, which was used to sprinkle the worshipers who entered. Wealthy men, who founded churches, encouraged the custom of presenting images and pictures in memory of some martyr or saint, as with pagan religionists it had formerly been the custom to consecrate a statue or a painting to some temple, as a thank-offering for benefits received from the gods. Churches dedicated to martyrs were enriched by such gifts more than others, for the reason that cures were supposed to be performed by them. Like the ancient temples of Æsculapius and Apollo, they were hung with tablets inscribed with

golden letters, with pictures representing the cures that had been performed, and with eyes, hands, and feet made of silver and gold. These had been very common in the temples of Æsculapius, in honor of the great cures he had performed. Bible historical paintings, as Moses and the Hebrews crossing the Red Sea, Joshua stopping the sun and moon, Ruth and Naomi, etc., were painted upon the walls of churches to educate the minds of children of large and small growth.

The ancient Hindoos and Egyptians were accustomed to carry around with them small images and symbols of their deities, which they regarded as amulets to protect them from danger and harm. Among these symbols the cross of Hermes was very common. The Christians were not slow in adopting all these; small images of Jesus and his mother were numerous, and the cross especially was widely introduced. After the time of Constantine great numbers of crosses, reputed to be made of the veritable wood of the cross upon which Jesus was crucified, were carved; these were cased in gold and used as ornaments and amulets, and were believed to possess a remarkable efficacy in averting all manner of evils. The Greeks and Romans never traveled by land or sea without tying about their necks images of the Goddess of Fortune or of the household gods called Lares, which represented the spirits of their good ancestors. It was easy for Christians to adopt these customs. In the sixth century it became common to have an image of Jesus embossed on the cross, which was thus converted into a crucifix. Small images of Jesus, his disciples, and his mother were worn about the neck, and were regarded with much the same veneration as the African savages regard their fetiches.

"Not only ancient ceremonies were adopted," says Mrs. Child, "with merely a change of object, but in some cases the images and emblems themselves were retained, with simply a change of name. The statue of a river-god was named the Jordan; Orpheus with his lyre was called Christ; and the image of Apollo was made to personate the good shepherd. In the oldest pictures of the Virgin Mary the face was covered with a blue veil, from which it might be inferred that they were representations of Isis, taken from Egyptian tem

ples and produced under a new name. Ancient pictures of the Virgin and her child are so much like the representations of Isis with her infant Horus that one might easily be mistaken for the other. [In fact many of the Egyptian paintings of Isis and Horus were taken to Rome and sold and worshiped as Mary and Jesus.] It was the universal custom to represent pagan deities accompanied by some emblem sacred to them, as Jupiter with his eagle, and Minerva with her owl. In very ancient nations, as in Egypt and Chaldea, the emblem was sometimes joined to the deity. Thus Osiris is often represented with the head of a hawk, and Isis with a cow's head; the hawk and the cow being symbols consecrated to them. Among the curiosities dug up at Nineveh winged animals abound, as they did in the sculptures of Egypt; and so do human figures with wings and with the heads of animals. Similar things are found in the earliest specimens of Christian art. The Prophet Ezekiel describes a vision of four living creatures which he saw. One had the face of a man, one of a lion, one of an ox, and one of an eagle. The Jewish rabbins considered them typical of the prophets Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel; but Christians applied them to the four evangelists. In the recess over the altar in the most ancient Christian churches it was common to represent a man's head and shoulders, with wings, to indicate Matthew; a lion's head on a man's shoulders, with wings, for Mark; the head of an ox, with wings, for Luke; and an eagle with a glory around its head for John. These winged animals are generally represented as holding a volume of the gospels. In some places John is represented with the body of a man and the head and clawed foot of an eagle. Sometimes the four stand in a row with human bodies, each holding a gospel in his hands—Mark with a lion's head, Luke with the head of an ox, and John with the head of an eagle. The resemblance to the Egyptian deities is very striking. In later times artists separated the emblem from the figure, and represented Mark accompanied by a lion, Luke by an ox, and John by an eagle. In some very ancient churches, and on some of the old Christian tombs at Rome, may still be seen effigies of Peter and Paul; also on old glass lamps in the Vatican. In

some cases Christ is represented as a lamb with a glory round his head, and six sheep in a row on each side of him, to signify the twelve apostles. Sometimes he stands in the midst of the sheep as the good shepherd, with a lamb in his arms. In an old Roman church, built in the sixth century, he is represented standing on the clouds with the book of life in his hand and the river Jordan flowing at his feet.

“After the Council of Ephesus had anathematized Nestorius, theological zeal multiplied images and pictures of the Virgin, bearing the inscription, ‘Mother of God.’ There is no evidence that the church recognized them as sacred before the beginning of the sixth century. Their general diffusion and popularity throughout the Western churches dates from the time of Gregory the Great. On a tablet in the Church of St. Dominick, at Rome, is the following inscription: ‘Here at the high altar is preserved that image of the most blessed Mary, which, being delineated by St. Luke the evangelist, received its colors and forms divinely. This is that image with which St. Gregory the Great, as a suppliant, purified Rome; and the pestilence being dispelled, the angel messenger of peace, from the summit of the castle of Adrian, restored health to the city, and the queen of heaven rejoiced.’ Pictures and images of Christ and the Virgin abounded everywhere before the end of the sixth century. The picture of the Virgin, said to be painted by Luke, brought by the Empress Eudoxia from the Holy Land, was considered a celestial safeguard to the city of Constantinople. When the emperor led his army to battle, it was carried on a superb car, in the midst of the troops. Houses were supposed to be protected by the presence of such pictures and images, and soldiers fought with more confidence under their guardianship. Incense was waved and lamps kept burning before them in the churches. Their aid was implored in emergencies, and many were the miracles believed to be wrought by them. Images and pictures of saints and martyrs were supposed to possess similar efficacy, though less in degree.

“The martyrs took the place of the old tutelary deities. Every nation, every city, every trade, every household, and every individual was under the protection of some particular

saint, whose images or pictures they especially venerated. Some of the oldest pictures of the virgin had 'Lucas' inscribed upon them. It was probably the name of some obscure artist, but it was supposed to signify Luke, the evangelist, who, on that account, became the tutelary saint of painters. A martyr named Agnes was the protector of flocks, probably because her name signified a lamb. A martyr named Phocas was the guardian of sailors. During a voyage the crew always set a plate for him, believing that he was invisibly present at their meals. Each day they took turns in purchasing the plate, and when the vessel arrived safely in port the money thus collected was distributed among the poor, in token of gratitude to their tutelary saint. The old autumn festivals in honor of Ceres were transferred to the Virgin Mary, and in many places the peasants laid the first flowers and the last fruits upon her altar, as they had been accustomed to do for the pagan goddess" (Progress of Religious Ideas, vol. iii, p. 289-293).

CANONIZATION OF SAINTS.—The number of saints multiplied so fast, and so many old customs were transferred to the worship of fictitious personages, that a council at Frankfort in the eighth century deemed it necessary to prohibit the invocation of any new saints. At last the pope decided that only those should be regarded as true saints whom the church authenticated by certain public ceremonies called canonization. This custom had been thought to resemble the Roman apotheosis, by which emperors and great men were placed among the gods. But ceremonies of apotheosis were sometimes performed for the living, while saints were never canonized till after their death. Nearly all the Fathers and the celebrated monks were canonized, and of course received the title of *saint*. The zealous Tertullian was not canonized, because he became a Montanist. The good and great Origen met with the same fate, because the Arians found a defense for their doctrines in his theory of emanation, while by a singular chance George, bishop of Alexandria, was sainted although he was an Arian. He became wealthy by furnishing the army with bacon; and after he was forced upon the people as a bishop he made himself odious to all classes by

his greediness for gain, his tyrannical temper, and persecuting spirit. But as the populace murdered him during the reign of Julian he was considered a martyr to pagan animosity, was canonized, and became the renowned St. George, the guardian saint of England. The Emperor Constantine had double honors. His pagan subjects, by ceremonies of apotheosis, placed him among the gods whose worship he had abjured, and Christians afterward placed him among the saints by process of canonization. In the eastern parts of the empire it was common to stamp medals with a monogram, signifying Jesus, Mary, and Constantine.

ROSARIES.—The anchorites of ancient Hindostan were accustomed to say their prayers on strings of lotus seeds or cords with knots tied at intervals. The Buddhists used strings of berries or beads for the same purpose. In the sixth century the Benedictine monks are said to have repeated their prayers according to a series of beads on a string. This custom afterward became universal in the Catholic church. The poor use the stones of olives and other hard seeds. The wealthy wore the rosary as an ornament, formed of gold, pearl, agate, and other precious stones" (Ibid, Vol. III., pp. 293, 294). Thus this pious trinket, or apparatus, which every Catholic considers so indispensable, was borrowed from the pagans.

DIVISIONS IN THE CHURCH.

THE GREEK CHURCH.—Neither the zeal of the popes, of the missionaries, nor the swords of kings, were able to prevent schisms, contentions, and diversions in what was claimed to be the universal church. The constant rivalry between the patriarchs of Rome and those of Constantinople at last terminated in an open and permanent rupture, and the adherents of the latter took the name of the Greek church. The special point upon which the fatal quarrel took place was concerning the mode by which the Holy Ghost came into existence. The eastern part of the church maintained that he proceeded from the Father *only*; but the Roman portion

insisted that he proceeded from the Father *and* the Son. For this speculative difference the patriarch of Rome excommunicated the patriarch of Constantinople and Alexandria in the fifth century. Various attempts to reunite were afterward made, but new excommunications were the only result. The Greek church set up an entire independence, and was governed by its own patriarch and bishops. The doctrines believed in by the two divisions were not dissimilar. Both accept the traditions of the Fathers as of equal authority with the scriptures, believing them to have been orally transmitted from the apostles. The lower order of their priests in the Greek church are allowed to marry once, provided it be not to a widow.

They invoke the Virgin and the saints, whose pictures abound in their churches and houses, sometimes set with precious stones. But they retain the opinion which caused the bitter contention, and allow no sculptured images. They regard the Romanists as idolaters. They number some 75,000,000.

NESTORIANS.—These are the adherents of Nestorius, who was excommunicated for heresy. Many of them traveled eastward and made proselytes in various Asiatic countries. It will be remembered that the doctrine taught by Nestorius was that Christ had two natures, human and divine, and this was subsequently received into the orthodox Catholic church; but as the Nestorians persisted in calling Mary the mother of Christ only, and refused to style her the mother of God, they remained excommunicated, and set up an opposition establishment. Their ceremonies, doctrines, and church government agree more closely with the Greek church than the Roman. When an image of the Virgin was presented to them by missionaries, they exclaimed indignantly, "We are Christians, not idolaters." They are often called Syrian Christians, because they have the ancient Syrian version of the New Testament and use the Syriac language in worship. They are computed at 300,000.

ARMENIANS.—Another independent branch of the church was formed in Armenia, which agreed with the Greek branch as regards the procession of the Holy Ghost, holding with

the Greek church that he or it proceeded from the father only. They long opposed the worship of images, but eventually became worshipers of them. The Armenians number 2,000,000.

ABYSSINIAN CHRISTIANS.—These are a superstitious, ignorant, mongrel class. They retain many Jewish notions and customs. They circumcise their children, keep Saturday as the Sabbath, and observe the laws of Moses prescribing what animals may be eaten. They are an unenterprising, ignorant people.

THE CHRISTIAN ÉRA.—The birth of Christ was not introduced as an era among the nations until the year 527. Dionysius Exigus, abbot of a monastery in Rome, was the first author of it. In the beginning there was considerable variation between the eras adopted by churches in different parts of the world, and differences of computation still remain. Nearly all Christian nations place the birth of Christ four thousand and four years after the creation, in the seven hundred and fifty-third year after the building of Rome. Some insist it was two years earlier, and others four years. As the era was not recognized by being brought into general use till nearly five hundred years had passed by, it is not singular that differences in reckoning should have taken place.

GODS VICEGERENTS—THE POPES OF ROME.

It is not proposed here to go into a history of this class of dignitaries, as to do so, and do them justice, would require a volume much larger than this. There were undoubtedly some honorable, moral men among them, but, sad to say, the proportion of the strictly moral class is exceedingly small. Many of them left a black and detestable record behind them, and were a deep disgrace to the cause and doctrines they attempted to promulgate. If Christianity is to be judged by the character of the men who stood at the head of its church it might indeed receive a very unfavorable judgment. A worse set of men than many proved themselves to be the world has scarcely known. Space cannot now be taken to mention the names, even, but of a small part of them, nor to

name but a tithe of the evil deeds which this small proportion committed. They will rather be passed over hastily, merely naming some of the most prominent crimes. We will begin at about the middle of the eighth century, drawing from the "Champions of the Church."

Pepin, king of France, was allied in succession with two of the popes of Rome in their iniquitous projects, and in order to make reparation to the church for his usurpation of the crown of France and the murder of his brother he surrendered to the holy see the domains of Romagna, which he had taken from the Lombards.

Charlemagne, who had invaded Lombardy, deprived his nephews of their inheritance, despoiled his brother-in-law to punish him for having undertaken their defense, carried him to Lyons in chains, and condemned him to end his days in prison. There Leo III. placed a crown of gold upon his head and made him one of the chief pillars of the church.

Paschal I. put out the eyes of Theodorus and Leo, two high officers of the church, because they criticised his iniquities. After his death the people wished to drag his body through the streets of Rome, so great was their detestation of his infamous crimes.

Popess Joan is said to have mounted the chair of St. Peter, celebrated mass and created bishops, in the disguise of a man's apparel. She became *enciente* by a cardinal, and died in the pangs of child-birth in the midst of a religious ceremony.

Nicholas, for a large sum of money, not only pardoned but virtually indorsed the ravishment of Judith, daughter of Charles the Bold, by the Count of Flanders. He was always ready to anathematize or flatter for gold. A French bishop, in a letter to this pope, used these words: "Thy cohort of priests, soiled with adulteries, incests, rapes, assassinations, is well worthy to form thy infamous court, for Rome is the residence of demons, and thou, Pope, art its Satan."

Sergius, while pope, led publicly a life soiled with debaucheries with the infamous courtesan Marozia, a monster of depravity who committed incest with her sons and grandsons.

John XI., son of Marozia, lived in incest with his mother while occupying the papal chair, as did also his brother, John

XII. These two popes surpassed their infamous mother in vileness. They were guilty of profanity, blasphemy, adultery, incest, and murder.

John XIII. cut off the nose and lips of the Prefect Peter, and originated the ceremony of baptizing church bells.

Boniface VII. was the son of a Roman prostitute. His life was one long succession of infamies. Murders, poisonings, and judicial assassinations succeeded each other in such rapid succession during his reign that writers of that period called him "Maliface."

Benedict IX. was made pope at the age of twelve years, and immediately surrendered himself to excessive depravity and the most shameful debaucheries. Twice was he driven from the papal chair, and twice he returned. During his pontificate there was a double schism in the church, so that there were three popes reigning at the same time.

Hildebrand, the poisoner of popes, usurped the pontifical seat under the name of Gregory VII. He excited civil wars, and filled Germany and Italy with disorder, murder, and carnage. He excommunicated the emperor of Germany, took from him his title of king, freed his people from their oath of allegiance, excited other princes against him, and at last reduced him to such a state of wretchedness that he became partially insane.

Adrian IV., the son of an English friar, compelled the Emperor Barbarossa to act as his groom. The brave and noble Arnold of Brescia was burned to death by this vicegerent of the Most High.

Innocent III. sent St. Dominic to persecute with fire and the sword and the most unheard-of tortures the unfortunate Waldenses. He swept through the land like a pestilence, the cross in one hand and the torch in the other, and sixty thousand victims were buried in the ruins of one city alone, merely because they could not subscribe in full to the dogmas of the church. For more than three years Innocent III. carried on the most relentless persecutions against the Albigenses. His able and efficient agent in this horrible work, Simon de Montfort, was a monster of villainy and cruelty. His bloodthirsty

nature made him a willing assistant of the church in its terrible persecutions of these unfortunate unbelievers.

Innocent IV. betrayed the Emperor Frederic and excited civil war in his dominions. Under his rule the mendicant monks became the plague of Europe. He died of a disease brought on by his debaucheries.

Boniface VIII. became pope after having assassinated his predecessor. He outraged the people, defied kings, pursued with hatred the Ghibelines, the partisans of the emperor of Germany, and invented the jubilees, which drew so much of the earnings of the poor into the coffers of the church. The archbishop of Narbonne accused him of being a simoniac, an assassin, a usurer, of living in concubinage with his own nieces, and of having children by them, and of having employed the riches extorted from the poor to bribe the Saracens to invade Italy.

John XXII. seized the tiara, seated himself on the pontifical throne, and proclaimed himself pope. In order to strengthen his usurpation, he launched his anathemas against the emperor of Germany and the king of France, persecuted sectarians, burned heretics, freed people from their allegiance, armed princes to war against each other, invaded kingdoms, preached new crusades, sold benefices, and extorted from the faithful upwards of twenty-five millions of florins.

Clement VI. bought from the celebrated Joanna of Naples the country of Avignon, promising therefor three hundred thousand florins of gold, which he never paid, and declared her innocent of the murder of Andreas, her husband, whom she had caused to be assassinated.

Innocent VI. was elected pope after subscribing to a constitution and regulations formed by the cardinals for the protection of their interests. Immediately upon assuming the pontifical dignity he annulled his agreement, and violated his oath by virtue of his infallibility. One of his minions assassinated the celebrated Reinzi. The reign of this pope was characterized by the persecutions of the Fratricellists.

Urban VI. and his men under him commenced the great schism which divided the church for so many years. After plotting the assassination of Queen Joanna of Naples, he was

driven from Rome. After a short absence he returned to the Holy City, and died in prison. During his pontificate the morals of the clergy became terribly corrupt. About this time the contentions of the antipopes and counterpopes were absolutely a disgrace to the name of the Christian church. Each opposing vicegerent, of course, claimed to be the infallible representative of Deity on earth, but for years covered Europe with wars and blood. If they were the representatives of any deity it must have been one of the worst man has known anything about.

John XXIII. was an infamous monster. He usurped the pontifical throne, and terrified the cardinals into confirming him in the position. A terrible and bloody war between three rival popes, in which all Europe became involved, followed the act. A general council was held and proceeded to depose John. The cardinals and bishops, with far too much truth, accused him of murders, incests, poisoning, and sodomy; of having seduced and carried on a sacrilegious and disgraceful intercourse with three hundred religious women; of having violated three sisters, and of having imprisoned a whole family in order that he might act out his pleasure with the different members of it. It was well that he was ultimately deposed.

Martin V. was a despicable character. He covered entire provinces with disaster and unhappiness, and caused the massacre of many people. His terrible decree against the Hussites spread devastation all over Germany. He caused the bones of Wickliffe to be burnt, and was guilty of private assassinations and the slaughter of thousands upon thousands of comparatively innocent men, women, and children.

Paul II. was a vile, vain, cruel, and licentious pontiff, whose great delight consisted in causing heretics to be tortured with heated braziers and infernal instruments of torment. He died a victim of beastly and gluttonous intemperance.

Alexander VI., although one of God's vicegerents, was also one of the most hideous monsters that ever walked the earth. All historians admit that this pope was one of the vilest and most criminal men that have cursed mankind. His career was one prolonged carnival of the most monstrous crimes that

the mind is capable of conceiving. He gave himself up to incest and sodomy, debauchery, assassination, and murder; and revelling in orgies, the mere description of which is enough to make the most obtuse and indifferent blush. He held adulterous connection with many women. Among his liaisons he corrupted and seduced a mother and two daughters. Upon the death of the mother he placed the eldest daughter in a convent and kept the younger and most beautiful for his own use. By her he had five children, one of whom was the notorious Lucretia Borgia, adulteress, poisoner, intriguer, murderer.

After he removed to Rome and became one of the highest dignitaries of the church, he was a notorious debaucher, pillaging soldier, the associate of robbers and assassins, and the incestuous lover of Rosa Vanozza, and all this under the garb of piety and a veritable anchorite. When he appeared in public his hands were crossed upon his breast, and his eyes bent to the earth. He visited hospitals and churches, and scattered his wealth lavishly, giving it out that at his death his great fortune would go to the poor and unfortunate. This was all a deep game of hypocrisy to enable him to reach the pontifical chair, then occupied by his uncle Calixtus. While he was playing this intricate game at Rome his Rosa was a part of the time at Venice; while there he wrote her as follows: "Rosa, my well-beloved, imitate my example; remain chaste until it shall become in my power to re-seek thee, and mingle our love in infinite pleasures. Let no other mouth profane thy charms, no other hand raise those veils which conceal my sovereign good. A little more patience and he who is called my uncle will bequeath me the chair of St. Peter as a heritage. In the mean time take great pains with the education of our children, for they are destined to govern people and kings."

He was, however, disappointed in his hopes of becoming pope upon the death of his uncle. He had assumed too much humility and piety. Pius II. was made pope. Alexander seized on the fortune his uncle had left him, and devoted himself to increasing it. Pius died. Paul II. succeeded him, and then Sixtus IV. Alexander, or Rodrigo Borgia as his own name was

bought the rich abbey of Subiaco, and the legation of Aragon and Castile. He threw off the mask and returned to his native Spain and put himself at the head of a band of adventurers, who committed such murders, rapes, and robberies, that Borgia was by the king driven from his possessions. He returned to Rome. He there lived openly with his mistress, besides engaging in many other debaucheries. His vicious life was scarcely noticed in the saturnalia of the papal court. The holy city had become one immense brothel in which were fifty thousand prostitutes. Cut-throats and assassins lurked in every street, and every road without its limits were infested with bands of banditti.

After the death of Innocent VIII., Rodrigo with his immense wealth bought up in the most shameless manner the votes of the cardinals, giving castles, palaces, perquisites, as might be demanded. A monk of Venice had become cardinal, and for his vote Rodrigo gave five thousand ducats of gold, and the promise of a night with his own daughter Lucretia. Thus this vile man became the vicar of Christ under the title of Alexander VI. He made such indecent haste to clothe himself in pontifical robes and wield pontifical power that Cardinal Medicis remarked thus to Lorenzo: "I fear, my brother, that we are surrendered to the most voracious wolf in the world; and he will doubtless devour us if we do not hinder it by prompt fight." Among the deeds he performed he set all laws, human and divine, aside; the veil of decency was torn away. His mistress and his daughter Lucretia and his other children were openly installed in the Vatican; his bastard children were loaded with wealth and honors. One son he made duke of Candia and prince of Beneventum. Another son was made a cardinal and archbishop of Valencia, in Spain. For a third son he negotiated a marriage with Donna Dancha, daughter of the king of Naples. Rome was given up to the wildest feasts and rejoicings on account of the marriage; the most lavish expenses were incurred, by which the treasury of the church was exhausted, but the faithful were drawn upon to replenish it. More wealth was lavished in licentious orgies of the pope's bastard children, including the infamous Lucretia. He pro-

ceeded to conclude a marriage between his daughter and John Sforza. Of this Stephen Infessura says : " At this marriage took place fetes and orgies worthy of Madame Lucretia. In the evening his Holiness, Cardinal Borgia, the duke of Candia, some courtiers, and several noble ladies, supped together, at which play-actors and female dancers appeared, who represented obscene plays, to the great joy of the guests." A recital of the orgies would be unfit to publish. It is notorious that Alexander had committed incest with his daughter, but he consented to this marriage as he had conceived a new passion for the beautiful sister of Alexander Farnese. This infamous man had prostituted to the pope his young sister, Wilhelmina, as the purchase price of pardon for a crime he had committed. Farnese finally obtained a cardinal's hat, and later on filled the papal chair under the title of Paul III.

Lucretia refused to accompany her husband and persisted in remaining in the palace of the Vatican. Burchard, the master of ceremonies at the pontifical court, and who closely noted all that occurred, says, " She no longer quitted the apartments of the holy Father day or night." She obtained complete control over the pope; all her requests were granted; she soon secured the control of the government of the church. No letter was opened save in her presence. No business dispatched only by her direction. The sacred college was invoked by her. She would often at the close of an orgy preside over the council of the cardinals with naked bosom, and in the scanty costume of a bacchante. In this shameless state she was accustomed to give and receive the most immodest embraces while the deliberations of the council turned rather on subjects of licentiousness than on ecclesiastical affairs. Burchard, though used to seeing so much in this line, felt compelled to exclaim, " Horror, ignominy, and disgrace."

Alexander VI had a characteristic negotiation with Bajaset, the Ottoman emperor at Constantinople. In a letter to the pope he wrote thus: " The Sultan Bajaset, by the grace of God, the greatest king and caliph of the two continents of Asia and Europe, to the excellent lord, Alexander, *father of all Christians*, by the gifts of providence, and most worthy

pontiff of the Roman church, reverence, kindness, and sincerity I pledge myself to give you three hundred thousand ducats, several cities, and the shirt of Jesus Christ, if your nation will remove Zizim from the world in any way you may judge best. A signal service will thus be rendered to the prisoner himself, and you, most illustrious lord, will not commit a crime, since, by your religion, Christians are ordered to exterminate heretics and Infidels." Comines affirms that the deed was performed, and further negotiations entered into between the two courts.

In 1494 Charles VIII. crossed the Alps and took city after city, and finally Rome itself, and the pope was glad to take refuge in the castle of San Angelo. But the tide of iniquity was not stayed. Rome seemed the cesspool of the deepest and vilest crimes. The most impure groves of ancient worship saw not the like of dissoluteness and debauchery that ruled at the pontiff's seat. Poison and the dagger were the agencies employed there. Nightly assassinations took place in the streets. The Vatican was the scene of sensual festivities, enlivened by farces and indecent songs. Infessura, the historian, says: "Most of the ecclesiastics had their mistresses, and all the convents of the capital were houses of ill-fame." Alexander made another licentious son of his a cardinal at the age of eighteen years, and he led a dissolute life. On the authority of Ranke, the oldest son, duke of Candia and Beneventum, was assassinated at the instance of the second son, Cæsar, the cardinal. The worst times prevailed ever known in Rome. Alexander and his son Cæsar, to raise money, made the members of the sacred college heirs of the holy see, and then sold the cardinals' hats to the highest bidders, and then poisoned the incumbents that they might come into possession of their effects. Ecclesiastical dignities, employments, and benefices were put up for sale like articles of merchandise, and poison or the dagger never failed to create the needed number of vacancies. The cardinal of Modena was one who thus fell that money could be secured. Cardinal Cæsar Borgia poisoned him. Father and son were fond of hunting, and spent days together in the woods, and were often accompanied by jugglers, prostitutes, and soldiers.

Tomasso Thomasi says: "They passed four whole days in the woods of Ostia, taking pleasure in surpassing in debauchery and licentiousness all that the most depraved imagination could invent, after which they returned to that Rome which they had rendered a caravan of brigands, a sanctuary of iniquity. It would be impossible to relate all the murders, rapes, and incests which were daily committed at the court of the pope, and scarcely would the life of man be long enough to allow him to transcribe the names of the victims who were stabbed, poisoned, or cast alive into the Tiber."

Burchard gives further light on the son. He says: "It was so great a pleasure for him to see blood flow that, following the example of the Emperor Commodus, he exercised himself with killing, in order to keep up his tiger rage. One day he inclosed the square of St. Peter with palisades, and ordered his guards to bring into the inclosure prisoners of war—men, women, and children. He then commenced a horrid contest with these unfortunate persons, they bound with cords, he armed at all points, mounted on a fierce courser. He shot some, hacked others with blows of his sabre, trampled some under his horse's feet, and in less than half an hour he caracoled alone in a sea of blood and in the midst of dead bodies, whilst his Holiness and Madame Lucretia were taking their pastime in a balcony, by assisting at this horrid scene." Some of the details are too horrible to repeat. The pope caused a prelate by the name of Florida to be thrown into a dismal dungeon where he was brought nearly to starvation. On promise of freedom and protection he made certain acknowledgments and confessions, but even after this the poor old archbishop was poisoned and all his property obtained upon false papers.

When ambassadors from many of the governments of Europe bore to Rome the indignation felt at the enormities of the pope, and Jerome Savonarola had the boldness to utter his convictions in reference thereto, Alexander VI. caused him to be thrown into prison and to be subjected to extraordinary torture to make him confess his wrong. In the agony of torture the feeble man confessed, but recanted as soon as relieved from his torture. Three times was he subjected to

this cruel ordeal, until his life was nearly taken, when at the instance of the pope he was burned at the stake. The sentence was executed on May 23, 1498, and the ashes of the good man were thrown into the Arno.

The machinations of Alexander VI. and his son Cæsar were numerous and diabolical. The son did all in his power to foment a war between France and Naples. The husband of his sister Lucretia was in his way, and between the father and son an assassin was set upon him as he entered the Vatican and he was nearly killed. He, however, recovered from his wounds, when a masked man entered his room and strangled him to death. The father and son were the instigators. The third marriage of Lucretia was ere long consummated with Alphonso of Este. In the orgies attendant upon it licentiousness was carried to its utmost limits. Burchard speaks thus of it: "This union was celebrated by saturnalia which had never yet been equaled. His holiness supped with his cardinals and the great dignitaries of his court, each having by his side two courtesans, who had no other dress than muslin robes and garlands of flowers. When the repast was over, the courtesans, to the number of fifty, performed lascivious dances, at first alone, then with cardinals, and finally, at a signal from Madame Lucretia, their robes fell off and the dances continued amid great applause from the holy Fathers."

On the 18th of August, 1503, Alexander and his son Cæsar, needing money very badly, convoked the cardinals to meet at the villa of Corneto. It was their intention to poison a wealthy cardinal by that name, as well as others, that they might come into possession of their wealth. A bottle or more of the wine was poisoned for the occasion, and conveyed with other wine to the place of the meeting. The father and son arrived somewhat exhausted, and called for wine. By accident, or on purpose, the poisoned wine was given them and they drank freely of it. The father died, but the son recovered. There was great rejoicing in the city at his death. He had been pope for eleven years, but they had been years of sorrow to the people. In speaking of his corpse as it lay in the church of St. Peter, Valatenan says: "The sight of that dead body, black, deformed, prodigiously swollen, and exhal-

ing an infectious odor, was a disgusting spectacle. Black froth covered his lips and nostrils ; his mouth was unnaturally open, and his tongue, swollen by poison, hung down upon his chin. Thus there was not any devotee or fanatic to kiss his feet or hands, as was the custom." Such was the infection that it was soon necessary to bury the body. No priest, cardinal, or officer attended the burial ceremony. Carpenters placed his body in a coffin which was too short, and into which they forced it by pressing in the feet and striking them with a hammer. Thus died a wretch as vile probably as ever lived upon the earth.

Julius III. was a depraved debauchee and sodomite.

Pius IV. was notorious for his avarice, licentiousness, and gluttony. He filled the papal palace with courtesans and beautiful boys for the purpose of satisfying his sensual passions and assuaging his lubricity.

Pius V. was a heartless and sanguinary wretch whose chief delight seemed to consist in personally presiding over the tortures of heretics.

Gregory XIII. was accessory to the bloody butchery of St. Bartholomew. After the massacre he caused the cannon in the castle of San Angelo to be fired, published a jubilee throughout Europe, and caused a medal to be struck to commemorate the slaughter of one hundred thousand men, women, and children.

Sixtus V. announced that like Christ he had come to bring a sword, not peace. He celebrated his coronation by hanging sixty heretics. He was a cold and crafty man, and but few greater villains filled the papal chair.

Paul V. incited insurrection among English Catholics, encouraged the Gunpowder Plot, caused the body of the celebrated author Dominis to be burned, with his books, in the public square, and, according to the historian, wallowed like a hog in the most stinking and disgusting odors of adultery and sodomy that can be imagined.

Urban VIII. secured a seat in the papal chair by treachery and force of arms. He poisoned his opponents in the sacred college, and made Rome the theater of violence, pillage, murder, and the most terrible atrocities. He pursued a policy of

intrigue which involved France and all Europe in a long and bloody war. He assassinated the young duke of Urbino. He handed Galileo over to the tortures of the Inquisition, and died cursing and blaspheming.

Innocent X. was a cruel, licentious pope, who destroyed the city of Castro, placed the papacy in the hands of a prostitute, taught the violation of oaths, and abandoned himself to disgusting debauchery.

Pius VI. was guilty of sodomy, adultery, incest, and murder. He organized bands of brigands, who ravaged the papal states, committed the most atrocious acts, poisoning and massacring all the French they could find. He incited bands of fanatics to burn harvests, poison rivers and fountains, and plunge their hands in the blood of his foes.

There are many others of the popes, both earlier and later, whose offenses might well be held up in condemnation of themselves as well as the system of religion of which they were representatives, but enough has probably been adduced to show that Christianity did not prove a sure savior to even the most favored ones within its ranks, and that the vicegerents of God and the vicars of Christ were no better than other men, if not materially worse. Let us take a brief view of a few others.

CHRISTIAN KINGS AND LEADERS.

Irene, empress of the East, one of the most zealous and pious of Christians, put out the eyes of her own son.

Peter the Hermit inaugurated a series of crusades to the Holy Land for the purpose of driving out the Infidels or Mohammedans, which caused the nations of Europe many millions of lives and an incalculable amount of treasure. He was a dangerous fanatic, but is nevertheless regarded as a saint of the Romish church.

Torquemada was emphatically a human hyena of the most pious stripe. He instituted the infernal Spanish Inquisition, and during the seventeen years he was Inquisitor-general burnt 12,000 persons alive and 7,000 in effigy, imprisoned 90,000 for

life, and tortured, with all the hellish cruelty and ingenuity he could devise, over 100,000 more.

Great cruelty was executed upon mankind under the reign of two Christian rulers, Ferdinand and Isabella. The unhappy Moors and Jews were driven out of Spain, and the diabolical fires of the Inquisition were lighted throughout the kingdom under their reign.

Hernando Cortez, a brave but cruel Christian bigot, introduced Christianity into Mexico at the point of the sword and by means of unheard-of cruelties upon the natives. Wholesale butcheries marked his course throughout. He caused the death of four millions of human beings. He found the newly-discovered country a heathen paradise, and left it a Christian waste.

Francisco Pizarro discovered and conquered Peru, and attempted to Christianize it by some of the most infamous acts of perfidy, treachery, and cruelty that stain human records. He massacred or burnt at the stake all who offered him the least opposition. He killed and ravaged and robbed in the name of the church, and proved himself the most perfidious of monsters, and all in the name of the Christian religion.

Martin Luther was a Romish monk of almost ungovernable passions and insane violence, and also with generous impulses. He became disgusted with the excessive corruptions of the church under Leo X., particularly the sale of indulgences, which was carried on to a most shameful extent, with the view of raising money upon the credulity of the simple dupes of the bishops and priests. This, coupled with a large share of personal ambition, induced Luther to throw off the obligations of his monkish vows and oppose the conduct of the pope and set up to be a pope himself. He spent his life in fighting the mother church and quarreling with his Protestant coadjutors. He manifested intense hatred to whatever opposed him. He was the father of the Reformation, but was far from being a perfect man. He advocated persecution, denounced the discoveries of science, inveighed against Copernicus, calling him "an old fool." He pretended to have an interview with the devil; he lived with a woman not his wife; he spent a stormy life in fighting theological foes and

wrangling with his associates, and died in despondency, and, according to Segur, "forlorn of God, and blaspheming to the very end."

John Calvin was a cold, heartless, cruel bigot and persecutor. He is called one of the fathers of the Reformation, but had it fallen to his lot to fill the papal chair, he would have been as bloody-handed and merciless as any one who ever sat in it. He went to Geneva in the prime of his manhood, and upon the ruins of the republic established a most abhorrent theocracy, of which he was the head and in which liberty and equality were scarcely known. He fastened upon the necks of the people the iron yoke of his merciless doctrines, and doomed all to hell who did not yield implicit obedience to him. Among his black crimes were the burning of Michael Servetus in a slow fire, because he did not believe Jesus was God; causing the execution of the poet James Gruet, because he composed some verses uncomplimentary of him; the banishment of Peter Caroli, because he presumed to differ in some things from him; the arrest and cruel treatment of Bolsec; the heartless treatment of Castalio, whom he literally drove to starvation; his vindictive conduct toward Pierre Ameaux for words thoughtlessly spoken, and the same of Henry de la Mar; the spiteful prosecution of Francis Favre; the vindictive pursuit of Ami Perrin; and his tyrannical conduct toward Gentilis, Berthillier, and others. In his conduct toward all these men he showed himself a cold-blooded, remorseless tyrant, having as little of the generous, humane element in his nature, indicative of real greatness, as any man that ever lived. Says Ingersoll: "Calvin was of a pallid, bloodless complexion; thin, sickly, irritable, gloomy, impatient, egotistic, tyrannical, heartless, and infamous. He was a strange compound of revengeful morality, malicious forgiveness, ferocious charity, egotistic humility, and a kind of hellish justice; in other words, he was as near like the God of the Old Testament as his health permitted."

The crime of sodomy has been charged against Calvin by Bolesque, Berthillier, and Bishop Trevern, and it was probably true. The latter writer also gives an account of Calvin's death. "He labored under many complaints, such as impos-

thumes, the rash, piles, the stone, the gout, consumption, shortness of breath, and spitting of blood." He was extremely unhappy in his last illness. "He cursed the hour in which he had ever studied or written, while from his ulcers and his whole body proceeded an abominable stench, which rendered him a nuisance to himself and to his domestics, who add, moreover, that this was the reason he would have no one to go and see him." Thus died a miserable man.

Henry VIII. of England is considered one of the greatest Christian kings who helped to establish the Reformation. He divorced two of his six wives, cut off the heads of two others, lit the fires of persecution, in which Catholics were burnt for recognizing the pope, and Protestants were burnt for not recognizing himself as the head of the church of England. Charles Dickens truthfully said he was "a disgrace to human nature, and a blot of blood and grease upon the history of England."

Charles V., the most powerful monarch of the sixteenth century, introduced the Inquisition into his German provinces, erected scaffolds that were hardly ever empty, and lighted fires that did not lack for human fuel. In pursuance of his bloody edicts one hundred thousand Netherlanders were burned, beheaded, or burned alive.

Philip II., the pious crowned cut-throat, called the "Demon of the South," spent his whole life in the extirpation of heresy. He plotted the butchery of St. Bartholomew seventeen years before the monstrous deed was done. He converted his dominions into a vast cemetery for the bodies of hundreds of thousands of his subjects executed upon the scaffold or burnt at the stake. He poisoned his own son, Don Carlos. The details of his reign exhibit a degree of cruelty and treachery with which little else in history compares.

The Duke of Alva, one of the most ferocious, bloodthirsty monsters to which the church has given birth, was a man of great vices and few virtues. His career in the Netherlands was one saturnalia of blood and butchery. The details of his horrible deeds and cruelty are enough to cause the heart of humanity to shudder for all time and cause Nero and Caligula to be considered mild and humane compared with him. He

nearly depopulated the Dutch provinces and converted them into a Christian slaughter pen.

John Knox of Scotland was a close disciple of John Calvin in belief and in practice. He was a fiery, relentless, hard-hearted bigot. He violated his vows to the Catholic faith by marrying. He participated in the assassination of Cardinal Beaton. Coward-like, he fled to England and Geneva whenever he felt himself insecure at home, and whenever he could with safety to himself, he incited his countrymen to insurrection. He marched through Scotland at the head of a band of ranting preachers, with the gospel in one hand and a firebrand in the other, burning churches, monasteries, and destroying the choicest libraries and works of art. He conspired against his queen, the beautiful and unfortunate Mary, and was accessory to the brutal assassination of her private secretary. He instigated many dark deeds of blood and treachery. By his dark plottings and cruel persecutions he became one of the most guilty accomplices in the base and barbarous execution of Mary Queen of Scots.

Mary, queen of England, was usually known as "Bloody Mary." Her reign was almost one continued reign of horrors. She caused to be burnt at the stake Bishops Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer, and three hundred men, women, and children. Her love for the church was intense.

Queen Elizabeth succeeded her sister Mary. The first was an ardent Catholic, the second as faithful a Protestant. They seemed to vie with each other in the spirit of persecution. The reign of Elizabeth was one of turmoil and bloodshed. She established the High Commission, a terrible tribunal for the punishment of heresy against the Protestant faith; filled all the jails in the kingdom with prisoners, and invented new and more cruel instruments of torture; put her cousin Mary Queen of Scots to death after keeping her in prison nineteen years, and put to death over two hundred of her subjects because they believed too much or too little.

Thomas Munzer was a German fanatic who, with a troop of violent and over-religious Anabaptists, went through Germany burning and plundering and spreading destruction and death

in the name of true Christianity. He caused the death of several thousands.

Catherine de Medici was an ardent lover of the church. She led a life of poisoning and crime. She was the immediate cause of the Massacre of St. Bartholomew in Paris in 1572, and which spread over the greater share of France. It is estimated that not less than one hundred thousand Huguenots were brutally butchered. She urged her own son to the commission of this monstrous crime, after which she poisoned him. Her execrable career casts a deep and damnable blot on the history of France.

James I. of England caused the execution of the good and brave Sir Walter Raleigh, filled England and Scotland with religious rancor and persecution, and caused the Bible to be translated.

James II., of England, made war in favor of the Catholic branch of the church upon his Protestant subjects, turning upon them a ruthless band of outlaws under the cruel Kirk, who robbed and plundered without mercy. He commissioned the monstrous Jefferies to go through the country holding his "Bloody Assizes," burning and hanging indiscriminately, and many of them for religious reasons, such excellent persons as Lady Alice Lisle and many others. He also sent the ferocious James Graham, of Claverhouse, on his mission of cruelty and blood to carry death and ruin to hundreds of families. His reign was a period of misery and terror.

Louis XIV. of France repealed the edict of Nantes and attempted the total destruction of the Huguenots. He put to death or drove into exile the industrial population of France, made Paris a vast almshouse, and reduced the poor peasantry to starvation. His reign was a period of disaster, suffering, and unhappiness.

There are many other Christian rulers and leaders whose names deserve to be made conspicuous on the roll of infamy, but enough has been shown here to make it clear to the reader that whatever great virtues Christianity may claim, its principal kings, queens, and leaders have done much to increase the suffering and unhappiness of human beings, and to make it obvious that that system of religion has done

more to increase human wretchedness than any other system in the world.

CHRISTIAN PERSECUTIONS.

As it is a palpable truth that Christianity has borrowed all its dogmas, tenets, sacraments, rites, and ceremonies from the pagan systems of religion which existed before it, it has nothing left upon which to set up a claim of originality save the persecutions which it has inaugurated and executed with a heavy hand. The credit, if so it may be called, of originating the Inquisition, the rack, the pulley, the boot, and many other horrible inventions with which to persuade unbelievers to become believers, cannot be justly taken from it. No other system of religion has been known to run an inquisition, or to use such infernal instruments as Christians have used to mutilate and mangle the bodies, to agonize and crush the spirits, and to utterly destroy the lives of those who dared to do a little thinking for themselves. Let no one attempt to deprive Christians of this honor. It belongs to them by right of discovery and by right of demoniacal incentives, intolerant and unforgiving dispositions. Christians when a young sect suffered somewhat from the persecution of older systems of religion, though to a much less degree than they fondly claim; but even if all is true that they claim, it amounts not to a thousandth part of what they have inflicted upon others—no, probably not a one-millionth part. But a few hundred Christians, at most, fell victims to pagan cruelty; while millions upon millions have died in Christian wars and under Christian persecutions. The number is variously estimated at from sixty million to one hundred and fifty million men, women, and children, and they had as good a right to their own opinions as their torturers and murderers, and an equal right to express them.

But little space can be allowed for the consideration of this subject, and but a mere mention will be made of the most flagrant and conspicuous instances, passing over thousands of other cases in silence. Although persecutions by Christians may not prove their dogmas and claims to be untrue, they at

least show that Christianity cannot be absolutely better than any other religion, inasmuch as it has caused the race of mankind vastly more physical and mental suffering.

THE INQUISITION, or "Holy Office" or "Holy Inquisition," as it was usually termed, shall first be considered. It is well known as the admirable and truly Christian institution for punishing those who dared to diverge in the slightest degree from the line of thought marked out by the church, and to cause men to see the beauty of the true inwardness of the Christian system. It was found also to greatly increase the power of the pope, bishops, and priests, though it made arrant hypocrites of the entire population of a kingdom.

St. Dominic, whose real name was Guzman, born in Calahorra, in Spain, in 1170, founder of the order of Dominican Friars, is the pious saint to whom must be credited the conception of the Inquisition. He received a commission from Pope Innocent III. to establish this cruel institution to aid in bringing the Waldenses, a heretical people in the south of France, back to the bosom of the church. By it many a poor soul was made to feel the tender mercies of the religion of Jesus as expounded by his professed followers nearly twelve hundred years after his death. The court of the Inquisition was established in Spain not long after, and it was from its origin a most cruel and unjust institution; but it was not till the time of Torquemada, nearly two hundred years later (in 1420), who, by Pope Innocent VIII., was made Inquisitor-General of Spain, that the brightest beauties and excellences of the Inquisition were fully brought out. He felt a burning desire to set in motion in Spain the diabolical machinery which, two centuries before, had proved so effective in France. He became a most active manipulator of that machinery, as tens of thousands, yes, hundreds of thousands, of poor unfortunate human beings had the best of reasons for knowing.

The means employed by the Inquisition for bringing its victims before this dreadful tribunal were of the most villainous and diabolical character. A class of insinuating, inquisitive persons called *familiars* were employed to pry into the secrets of families and individuals, who by them were brought

before this terrible court at all hours of the day and night. Anonymous accusations answered as well as any upon which to cause an arrest. The accused were not confronted by witnesses; torture of the most terrible kind was relied upon to force confessions and secure convictions, and these tortures were inflicted in deep vaults and underground rooms, from whence the cries and shrieks of the poor wretches could not be heard. The tortures by the rack, the pulley, the thumb-screw, and the various other inventions to cause excruciating pain, were kept up until the person fainted, or became completely exhausted, when they would be suspended until the sufferer was deemed able to endure another instalment of this species of Christian mercy. The victim was not informed of what crime he was accused, but was commanded to confess what he had done. Often and again have poor human beings been tortured in this fiendish manner without having the slightest intimation of what charge had been brought against them, or of the least thing they had done in violation of the laws of the church.

The Inquisition instituted the worst system of espionage ever known. Everybody was a spy upon everybody else. Nearly every member of society was watching for faults in others to complain of, thinking thereby to stand well with the holy Inquisitors, and thus prevent accusations being entered against them. Parents often accused children, and children accused parents; brother accused brother, and husbands and wives accused each other; in fact, a real accusation was unnecessary; a mere hint or suspicion was all that was needed. Upon a bare hint the inquisitors would proceed with their persuasive tortures until the poor wretch passing through the ordeal would confess something wide of the mark of what he was accused of, and perhaps a mere imaginary offense which they had not committed. When stealthily arrested and taken to the Inquisition, no opportunity was allowed for communication with friends outside; no word could go out, and no sympathy or comforts from friends were suffered to reach him. The smallest modicum of food was allowed, and that of the very poorest quality.

Some of the buildings used for the purpose were, in appearance, noble edifices, but often contained hundreds of dungeons and cells, the outer wall being fifty feet high and without openings, to cut off all observation from within or without. The cells on the ground floor were for prisoners of the lower class, while the tiers above were for superior classes. Sentinels walked about continually, to listen to what might be said, and to prevent all communication between the prisoners. If the strict rules were violated in the cells, punishment by beating was inflicted with severity. On one occasion, in an inquisition in Portugal, a prisoner having a violent cough was ordered to abstain from coughing. He replied that it was not in his power to do so. Upon his coughing again the officer entered his cell, stripped the sufferer, and beat him so severely that he died.

Sometimes prisoners passed months in those miserable quarters without knowing of what they were accused. In many cases they were not brought to trial until they requested it, when, with not a little ceremony, they were ushered into the chamber where the holy office was in session. The president ordered the prisoner to kneel, when an oath was administered and this question put to him: "Will you promise to conceal the secrets of the holy office and to speak the truth?" If the answer was in the negative the prisoner was remanded to the cell and a severe punishment administered; if in the affirmative, all manner of questions were put to him and his words taken down by a clerk. When completed, the jailer was summoned by a bell, and as the prisoner was about to return to his cell the injunction was laid upon him: "Tax your memory, recollect all the sins you have ever committed, and when you are again brought here communicate them to the holy office." A second examination of a similar character was soon had. Prisoners were often deceived by promises that they should be set at liberty if they would accuse themselves, and falling into the snare secured their own destruction. Instances occurred of some who, relying on promises of release, made accusations of themselves of crimes they never committed, and thus became martyrs to their own mistakes. Where a prisoner was too spirited to accuse him-

self, or had too much sense to be entrapped, a copy of an indictment would be handed him, in which he would be accused of a great number of offenses, and entirely without truth. The accused very naturally became indignant, and denied that he was guilty, especially of the larger offenses. When the grosser crimes were thus denied, the inquisitors would snatch the indictment from the hands of the poor prisoner, saying, "By your denying only those crimes which you mention, you implicitly confess the rest, and we shall, therefore, proceed accordingly." Though usually the torture was allowed to be used but three times, it was so cruelly inflicted that the prisoner either died under it or was made a cripple for life.

A description of the process of torturing is thus given: The prisoner, on refusing to comply with the inquisitor's demand to confess all the crimes he was charged with, was conveyed to the torture room, which, if in a room above ground, was lined with a kind of quilting which covered all the crevices so as to prevent the cries from escaping and being heard by other prisoners or by those outside. The horrified prisoner would be suddenly surrounded by six wretches, who stripped him naked to the skin. He was then laid upon his back on a kind of stand a few feet from the floor. They first put an iron collar upon his neck, a ring upon each foot, by which he was fastened to the stand. His limbs were then stretched out; two ropes were wound round each arm and two round each thigh; they were passed under the scaffold, through holes for the purpose; all were drawn tight at the same instant, at a given signal, by four of the assistants. The pain thus produced was intolerable; the ropes were of small size and cut deeply into the prisoner's flesh, and often to the bones, causing the blood to gush out in eight different places. If confession was not immediately made, the same process was repeated four different times. A surgeon in attendance often felt the sufferer's temples to see if immediate danger was present, and often the surgeon was so hard-hearted as to assure the prisoner that if he died under the ordeal he would have himself to blame for his obstinacy, and would be guilty of self-murder. When the extremity of anguish was reached, the tender frame

almost torn in pieces, and the soul agonized to the last point of endurance, the heartless professors of the religion of Jesus who were acting as judges looked on with all the indifference of stoics or wooden men. The words they would utter were the severest mockery, advising the sufferer to confess his guilt and thus obtain a free pardon. But where the victim was brave enough to endure the torture inflicted upon him without confessing to what he was not guilty of, all this was without effect.

Often several weeks were allowed to pass by before the sufferer would be well enough to endure the second torture, which was in this wise: His arms were forced backward so that the palms of his hands were turned outward behind him, when by means of a rope that fastened them together at the wrists, and which was turned by an engine, they were drawn by degrees nearer each other in such a manner that the back of each hand touched and stood exactly parallel to the other. In consequence of this violent contortion the shoulders were dislocated and often a considerable quantity of blood was forced from the mouth. After this torture was repeated three times the sufferer would be taken to the dungeon, where the surgeon would adjust the dislocated joints and then place him again in exquisite torment.

Two months would need to pass away before the poor creature would be in condition to pass through the third ordeal. At best but partially recovered, he would then be again subjected to torture, which was often done by the executioner fastening a heavy iron chain twice round his body, which, crossing upon his stomach, terminated at the wrists. Then they placed him with his back against a thick board, at each extremity of which was a pulley through which passed a rope that caught the ends of the chains at the wrists. Then the executioner stretched the rope by means of a roller placed at a distance, and the chain pressed and bruised his stomach in proportion as it was tightened. The prisoner would be tortured in this manner to such a degree that both wrists and shoulders would be dislocated. Upon the surgeons resetting them the barbarous persecutors, not yet satisfied with the suffering they had produced, would proceed to subject the

man to the inhuman operation the second time. The sufferer would after this be remanded to his dungeon, where the surgeon would replace the dislocated joints and dress his wounds. Here he remained till the *auto da f * or jail delivery when happily he would be discharged. To such a helpless condition would the poor victim be reduced that many weeks must often pass by before he could so much as get his hands to his mouth; and if he was set at liberty he could scarcely hope to recover from the severe torture to which he had been subjected.

Females fared little better than males, no mercy being shown them on account of sex. They were subjected to the same kind of cruelties, with the additional mortification arising from the indecent exposure of their persons.

When a confession was not drawn out by such a course of torture as here described, stratagem and deception were often resorted to to induce the sufferer to disclose. A spy was often put in the cell, either with the pretense of taking care of him or as a fellow-prisoner, who was also subjected to the same cruel treatment, and by condoling with the unfortunate man worried from him the secret that was sought. These snares not unfrequently proved successful, as they were plied under the guise of friendship. Finally, if the prisoner was not found guilty in any way, he was either tortured and harrassed to death or turned out again into the world nearer dead than alive, and in a condition from which he never recovered.

The foregoing was the mode of torture at one time much practiced in Portugal, but of course the processes were numerous, and no device of cruelty was untried. Archibald Bower, one of the inquisitors of the Inquisition, made his escape in 1626. The following is taken from his statements: "There was an anvil fixed in the middle of the floor, with a spike, not very sharp, projecting upwards. The accused was hoisted up and lowered by ropes at the four corners of the room until his back-bone rested on this spike. The weight of his body tended to fracture his spine. This torture lasted eleven hours unless the prisoner confessed. Matches of tow and pitch were wrapped around the hands of women and then fired until their hands were consumed; or cords were tied so

tight round their thumbs as to cause the blood to flow from their nails." As Ingersoll says: "Let it be remembered that all churches have persecuted heretics to the extent of their power. Every nerve in the human body capable of pain has been sought out and touched by the church. Toleration has increased only when and where the power of the church has diminished. . . . Protestants and Catholics vied with each other in the work of enslaving the human mind. For ages they were rivals in the infamous effort to rid the earth of honest people. They infested every country, every city, town, hamlet, and family. They appealed to the worst passions of the human heart. They sowed the seed of discord in every land. Brother denounced brother, wives informed against their husbands, mothers accused their children, dungeons were crowded with the innocent; the flesh of the good and the true rotted in the clasp of chains; the flames devoured the heroic, and in the name of the most merciful God his children were exterminated with famine, sword, and fire. Over the wild waves of battle rose and fell the banner of Jesus Christ. For sixteen hundred years the robes of the church were red with innocent blood. The ingenuity of Christians was exhausted in devising punishment severe enough to be inflicted upon Christians who honestly and sincerely differed with them on any point whatever."

The Inquisition was for nearly five hundred years the prominent means used by the church in punishing heretics and those who honestly differed from the masses. In the seventeen years that Torquemada was Inquisitor-General in Spain, from 1481 to 1498, it is estimated that 97,371 persons were executed in various modes, 10,220 burnt alive, 4,000 killed in secret dungeons, besides as many as 100,000 who were most cruelly tortured, but whose lives were barely spared. Under Diego de Doga, bishop of Seville, who succeeded Torquemada, 1,664 were burnt alive, 882 in effigy, and 32,456 punished in other ways. Under the pious Ximenes 2,536 were burnt alive, 1,368 burnt in effigy, and 27,263 punished in other ways. It is claimed that Victor Hugo, the eminent French writer, has estimated the total number of victims of the Inquisition to amount to five millions of human beings.

During the five centuries the Inquisition was in operation it was most used in Spain, Portugal, France, the Netherlands, and Italy; and when the Spaniards introduced Christianity into America they brought the holy Inquisition with them also.

St. Dominic, the inventor of the Inquisition, was canonized as a saint by Pope Gregory IX.

"Inquisition, model most complete
Of perfect wickedness; where deeds were done—
Deeds! let them ne'er be named—and set and planned
Deliberately, and with most musing pains,
How to extremest thrill of agony
The flesh and blood and souls of men,
Her victims, might be wrought; and when she saw
New tortures to her laboring fancies born,
She leaped for joy, and made great haste to try
Their force, well pleased to hear a deeper groan."

AUTO DA FE, OR ACT OF FAITH.—This was, in the Catholic countries, a solemn day set apart for the execution of the condemned prisoners of the Inquisition, or the absolution of accused persons not deemed guilty of death. Thousands of persons perished on these days, principally by burning at the stake. It was instituted in Spain in 1556. It was held in Lisbon as late as the 20th of September, 1761, when Gabriel Malagrida, an old man of seventy years, and fifty-four other persons, were publicly burnt at the stake because they were guilty of holding honest convictions not exactly in keeping with the rule laid down by priests. A nun was burned at Seville, November 7, 1680.

A somewhat noted *auto da fe* took place in Madrid on the 30th of June, 1682, but two hundred years ago. A vast number of people gathered near the place where the sad deed was to be performed, dressed in their finest apparel. In the great square was erected a high scaffold, and thither, from seven in the morning till the close of the day, condemned heretics of both sexes, and from all the inquisitions in the kingdom, were brought for execution. Of these condemned unfortunates twenty men and women (Christians), one Mohammedan, and fifty Jews and Jewesses were condemned to be burnt. Large numbers of others were sentenced to long confinement, some to be publicly whipped, and some sent to

the galleys. These last wore large pasteboard caps, with inscriptions on them, bore torches in their hands, and had halters round their necks.

On this solemn occasion the whole court of Spain was present. The Grand Inquisitor's chair was placed in a sort of tribunal, far above the king. The nobles acted the part of sheriffs, leading such criminals as were to be burnt, they being confined with strong cords. The other condemned ones were led by the familiars of the Inquisition. Among those who were to be burnt was a beautiful young Jewess but seventeen years of age. Being on the same side of the scaffold with the queen, and hoping to arouse some pity in her breast, to the extent of granting a pardon, the wretched young Jewess addressed to her these words: "Great queen! will not your royal presence be of some service to me in my miserable condition? Have regard to my youth, and oh! consider that I am about to die for professing a religion imbibed from my earliest infancy!"

The merciful and Christian queen made some show of pity at the distress she saw before her; but when she thought of her church and her religion she coldly turned her eyes away, not daring to interfere when the holy Inquisition had pronounced sentence of death, and she suffered the beautiful young maiden to die, without making an effort to save her, though she had committed no fault.

Mass then began. The chief inquisitor, dressed in his cope, and having a miter on his head, descended from the amphitheater and advanced to the king's balcony, carrying a cross and the four gospels, with a book containing the oath by which the kings of Spain are bound to protect the Catholic faith and extirpate heretics, supporting with all their power the decrees of the holy Inquisition. The chief inquisitor administered the oath anew to the king, who stood bareheaded. Soon followed the burning of the women and men condemned to this death, and they all exhibited true heroism and bravery. They did not flinch from the fire, but many of them thrust their hands and feet into the flames, apparently not being conscious of the pain they were in.

McDonnell gives this thrilling description of another occasion of the same act of Christian faith :

"It is a gala day in Madrid ; it is the Christian Sabbath. The pious who have attended church are moving toward the massive, gloomy building of the Inquisition. The Spanish king and his courtiers are sitting on an elevated stage which is richly carpeted, and the royal person is shaded by a silken canopy. There are also to be seen familiars and grandees from Cordova, and from other cities. Bishops in rich robes are in conspicuous positions, and great numbers of priests, monks, and friars attest that there is to be a ceremony of some kind in which the church is greatly interested. The sunbeams flash upon the miters and crosses of the ecclesiastics, and upon the swords and spears and other military weapons of the armed missionaries of the 'true faith.' All present seem to be in a state of excited expectation. But hark ! a bell tolls—it has been tolling at intervals since the early dawn. It cannot be the call for an imposing or brilliant religious ceremony ; no, 'tis a death-knell, the knell for another dread act of religious persecution. See ! There is now a movement in the vast crowd in front of the Inquisition ; its heavy gates—like the gates of hell—yawn wide, and a procession, as if intended to represent an egress of the spirits of the damned, moves slowly out. Dominican friars—called pious men—are in advance, bearing the repulsive banner of the 'Holy Inquisition ;' penitents, or those who had been terrified into compliance, follow ; and then follow the barefooted, sad, and long array of those who are destined for the flames. Some with pallid faces are wounded and limping ; some are too weak and emaciated to walk, and these, with others whose bones have been broken, and whose flesh has been mangled by the torture, are rudely born toward the guarded space in front of the majesty, the episcopacy, and the nobility of Spain and in the midst of the fanatical crowd, whose eyes are hungry for a fresh scene of torture. The condemned are clad in the yellow *san-benito*, disfigured with infernal effigies ; each wears the *coroza*, or pointed cap of infamy, and holds an extinguished torch ; and each is attended by a Jesuit who hurls reproaches instead of offering a word of pity or a prayer for mercy. They have now reached the great cross erected in

the field of the Cruz del Quemadaro, the place of execution; the sentence is read, a blow is given to each of the condemned by one of the clerical officers of the Inquisition, and the accused are delivered over to the secular power. A feeble, formal, hypocritical plea in their behalf is muttered by a priest—a vile deceit, for stakes are fixed and fuel is ready, and the condemned are chained and weeping. There is no offering of mercy in reply to that plea, for the Christian king ostentatiously sends his gilded and adorned fagot to be added to the pile. Oh horror! The flames ascend, a hundred human beings are shrieking and groaning, and writhing in torture. The surrounding multitude are delighted, and thanks to God are given by the king, by the priests, and by the people, for this triumph of the true faith, for the extirpation of so much heresy, and for the terrible spectacle of another *auto da fê* !”

PERSECUTIONS OF THE WALDENSES.—About the year 1150 Peter Waldo, a man of virtue and intelligence, a native of Lyons, France, had the temerity to dissent, as numbers of brave men did before him, from certain tenets and practices of the church and to propose some measures of reform. Those who embraced his views were called Waldoys or Waldenses. The bishop of Lyons, taking umbrage at Waldo's presumption in freely stating his views, sent a deputation to admonish him to refrain from such discussions and practices in the future. Waldo, like a brave, independent man, answered, “I cannot be silent in a cause of such importance as the salvation of men's souls, wherein I must obey God rather than man.” The powers of the church could not brook this, and commenced to hunt him down. After secret-ing himself for three years he was enabled to escape to the mountains of Dauphiny. In that province and Picardy great numbers embraced his views. In consequence of this Philip, king of France, sent out a religio-military force and destroyed over three hundred gentlemen's seats, erasing some walled towns, burning large numbers of those who had dared to think for themselves, and driving the residents into Flanders and Germany. Still their views spread rapidly, and the pope

became alarmed and accused them of heresy and decided upon their extirpation. Excommunications, anathemas, canons, constitutions, and decrees, by which they were rendered incapable of holding places of honor, trust, and profit, were issued against them, and their lands, houses, goods, and property of all kinds were seized by the powers of the church and confiscated. Some of the persecuted people fled to Spain for refuge, but they also met bitter persecution there at the command of the church officials. Still the Waldenses increased, and people dared to denounce the errors and corruptions of the church. About this time it was that St. Dominic devised the Inquisition for the purpose of suppressing these dangerous heretics. This hellish institution was sanctioned by Pope Innocent III. The thousands who were tortured and murdered in that infernal device of the church can never be known. St. Dominic instituted his order of Dominican friars, and they became the cruelest persecutors ever known. Their power was unlimited, and they proceeded against whom they pleased, without the slightest consideration of age, sex, or rank. An accusation was sufficient, without proof; and it was impossible for friends, with any safety to themselves, to render any aid to the accused and arrested. To carry to those confined a little straw, or a cup of water, was called "favoring heretics," and was sufficient ground for arrest. No lawyer dared defend the accused. No plea for them would be tolerated. The malice of those Christians even went beyond the grave, and the bones of many Waldenses who had long been dead were dug up and burnt. If even a dying man was accused of being a follower of Waldo, his property was seized by the church and his family deprived of all means of livelihood. So many were arrested that prisons could not be found for them nor food to sustain them. Thousands in consequence suffered the pangs of hunger, and great numbers were put to death in most excruciating torture. And this was kept up year after year and decade after decade. Succeeding popes gave commissions to bloodthirsty men to hunt down and destroy that brave, virtuous people. Thousands upon thousands suffered and died, and no note was ever taken of the facts. Time after time brutal troops were sent

into the neighborhoods of the quiet Waldenses, their houses plundered, their homes destroyed, the young women ravished, and men, women, and children put to most cruel deaths. If a person even expressed compassion or pity for the sufferer, it was sufficient; he was also arrested and subjected to a similar fate; and this was done at the command of priests, bishops, and archbishops. This terrible persecution was kept up more than a century. The horrors experienced by those good people during all that time have been but feebly written.

In 1488 Pope Innocent VIII sent a force into France to coöperate with the local bishops, deacons, archbishops, and archdeacons to destroy the unfortunate Waldenses who occupied the Valley of Loyse. The people apprehending danger and death fled to the mountains and hid themselves in caverns. The forces of the church pursued them, and great numbers of the poor persecuted people, men, women, and children, were cast from high precipices and dashed to pieces. Large numbers, however, retired to the caves and secret hiding places, but their implacable foes of the church still pursued them; the mouths of the caves were filled with fagots, which were burnt, thus suffocating great numbers. Four hundred infants were smothered either in their cradles or in their mothers' arms. Over three thousand were thus brutally killed in that one campaign, and all in the name of the religion of Jesus.

These persecuted people were temperate, industrious, and frugal. When left alone by their persecutors they made the provinces of Dauphiny, Provence, etc., flourish and blossom like the rose. But the church gave them little rest. Their property was taken from them, their homes repeatedly destroyed, and parents and children slaughtered in the most brutal manner. The king of France at one time attempted to interfere in behalf of the poor sufferers, and to have their property restored to those still remaining alive; but bishops and archbishops pleaded that the pope had excommunicated them, and that their property legitimately belonged to the church. The arguments and the power of the church were invincible, and the civil forces had to yield and retire,

leaving the poor wretches to their fate, which was the fate of the lamb in the jaws of the wolf. Another king, at another time, did for a while stay the hand of the church temporarily, and afforded the ostracised ones temporary relief.

In consequence, however, of their almost continual persecutions in France, the Waldenses fled to various parts of the world for safety and rest. Many located in the valley of Piedmont, in Italy, where they flourished for a time, until the power of the church sought them out and crushed them. They were hunted down like wild beasts by the minions of the church, and thousands met the most cruel deaths without the slightest exhibition of the elements of mercy or pity. Though Claudius, archbishop of Turin, said of them, "Their heresy excepted, they generally live a purer life than other Christians," he showed them no forbearance. Expedition after expedition was sent out against them, and edict after edict was hurled at them from the Vatican. Pope Innocent VIII. ordered his lieutenants "to take up arms against the Waldenses and other heretics, and to come to an understanding to crush them like venomous asps, and to contribute all their care to so holy and so necessary an extermination." Later, Pope Pius IV., in 1560, authorized another brutal crusade against them, and the most terrible cruelties were practiced on them down to 1655, when, through the interposition of Oliver Cromwell, of England, they were left, for a while at least, undisturbed.

A Catholic writer furnishes a narrative of one of the atrocities committed against the Waldenses in 1560, and states: "Having written you from time to time what has been done here in the affair of heresy, I have now to inform you of the dreadful justice which began to be executed on these Lutherans this morning, being the 11th of June, and to tell you the truth, I can compare it to nothing but the slaughter of so many sheep. They were shut up in one house, as in a sheepfold. The executioner went, and bringing out one of them, covered his face with a napkin, or benda, as we call it; led him out to a field near the house, and causing him to kneel down, cut his throat with a knife. Then taking off the bloody napkin he went and brought out another, whom he

put to death after the same manner. In this way the whole number of eighty-eight men were butchered. I still shudder when I think of the executioner, with his bloody knife between his teeth, the dripping napkin in his hand, his arm besmeared with gore, going to the house and taking out one victim after another, just as a butcher does sheep he means to kill."

Tommaso Costo, a Catholic historian, also wrote concerning the cruelties to the Waldenses: "Some had their throats cut, others were sawn through the middle, and others were thrown from the top of a high cliff. All were cruelly but deservedly put to death."

The Waldenses, though subjected to such woful persecution, were not, after all, exterminated. They contended for liberty of opinion with extraordinary pertinacity; but it was not until the reign of the late Victor Emmanuel, king of Italy, that they received the same privileges as others.

PERSECUTIONS OF THE ALBIGENSES.—These were a people similar in some respects to the Waldenses but unlike them in others. On account of their heretical views they were condemned in the Council of the Lateran, and Pope Alexander III. issued a pronunciamiento against them. Their views spread rapidly, and men of worth, wealth, and position were numbered with them. Expeditions were sent out by the authorities at Rome to extirpate these heretics. In describing the siege by church forces against the town of Beziers, in France, where many of the Albigesnes resided, Fox tells us that the inhabitants, refusing to accede to the unjust terms demanded of them, a general assault was made by the besiegers, and the place taken by storm, when every cruelty that barbarous superstition could devise was practiced. Nothing was to be heard but the groans of men, who lay weltering in their blood; the lamentations of mothers, who, after being violated by the soldiery, had their children taken from them and dashed to pieces before their eyes. The city being fired in several places, new scenes of confusion arose. At many points the streets were streaming with blood. Those who hid themselves in their dwellings had only the dreadful

alternative to remain and perish in the flames or rush out and fall by the swords of the soldiers. The bloody and brutal legate from the pope seemed to enjoy the carnage hugely, and cried out to the troops, "Kill them! kill them all! kill every man, woman, and child! kill Roman Catholics as well as Albigenses, for when they are dead the Lord knows how to pick out his own!"

Thus the beautiful city of Beziers was, in the name of Jesus, reduced to a heap of ruins, and 60,000 innocent persons murdered in cold blood. A similar attack was made on a town called Carcasson, with similar result. All were put to death.

This same legate appointed Simon de Montfort to persecute and exterminate the Albigenses, and one of the most bloody murderers that ever lived he proved himself to be. He gathered a force of soldiers and proceeded against the harmless people, and ordered every prisoner to be immediately burnt. Not having force enough under him to murder as fast as he wished, he called upon the different Christian powers to send men to his aid. He placed the town of Menerbe under seige, which from lack of water was compelled to yield. Zermes, the governor, was put in prison, where he died. His wife, sister, daughter, and one hundred and eighty others were committed to the flames. Many other castles surrendered to this fiendish monster, and the inhabitants were butchered in the most horrible manner. Miromand was afterward besieged by a stronger force under De Montfort. It was taken by storm, and five thousand men, women, and children summarily and cruelly put to death.

Simon de Montfort was called the "Avenger of the Church," and his army of bloody murderers was called the "Holy Army." He followed up his atrocious proceedings in different places, some of which are thus recorded by Catholic authors: "He took several castles which resisted the holy church, and hanged of good right many of their inhabitants upon gibbets, which they had well merited." Relative to another place the historian says, "The besieged, wearied out with a long siege, having fled during the night, were stopped by our guards, who cut the throats of as many of

them as they could find." And of another place: "The Count Simon, having taken the castle, caused the above named Aimeri, a notable nobleman, to be hanged upon a gibbet, also a small number of knights. The other nobles, with some who had mixed among them in the hope that the knights would be spared, to the number of about eighty, were put to the sword; and lastly, some three hundred heretics burnt in this world were thus given over by him to the eternal fire, and Guirande, the lady of the chateau, cast into a well, was there crushed down with stones."

"After a series of butcheries during the first year of the crusade against the Albigenses, the 'holy army,' with its numerous reinforcements, commenced its second year's campaign by taking, with other places, the castle of Brom, when about one hundred of its defenders were shockingly mutilated. Their noses were cut off and their eyes were torn out; but one individual was left one eye so that he might be able to conduct the Christian savages to the town of Carabat. All through their terrible course the taking of several other castles and towns was followed by similar atrocities; prisoners were offered the choice of apostasy, or fire, or mutilation. When Montfort advanced to the attack of Toulouse the peasants laboring in the field were slaughtered—men, women, and children were butchered—villages, cottages, and farmhouses were burnt to the ground, and the pope's legate also ordered the destruction of the vines and the whole of the standing crops. Thus, when town after town had surrendered, Montfort was sure to order the execution of the inhabitants, and thus for over twenty years were the Albigenses persecuted and slaughtered by the merciful hosts of the head of the church.'

PERSECUTIONS OF THE HUSSITES.—John Huss, in Bohemia, embraced the moderate reform views of Wickliffe near the close of the fifteenth century. Of course the slightest independence of thought could not be tolerated; he was summoned before the Council of Constance, and was treacherously arrested and thrown into prison. He was summarily con-

demned and sentenced to be burnt. He endured the cruel death with the utmost heroism.

Jerome of Prague, at about the same time, embraced the views of Wickliffe and suffered the same fate. These two men had many disciples, and many were put to death for believing what they taught.

After the Reformation was fully inaugurated, the persecutions were still more bitter and relentless. In almost every country in Europe the Christian torture-implements, the stake and the scaffold, were kept in pretty active employment. Catholics and Protestants vied with each other in persecuting, slaughtering, and killing those opposed to them in religion. A large volume would be required to give the details, and here they must be passed over with the merest mention. Under Emperor Charles V. the soil of Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands had been thoroughly saturated with the blood of human beings. The number in the Netherlands alone who were burnt, beheaded, or buried alive for the offense of reading the Scriptures or looking askance at a graven image, or of ridiculing the actual presence of the body and blood of Christ in a wafer, have by competent judges been estimated as high as one hundred thousand persons.

Under Philip II. the bloody work was continued. It is believed that he did not fall short of his predecessor in the number of victims he sent prematurely to eternity for believing too much or too little.

The Duke of Alva was the bloody executioner to carry out the will of the two last named sovereigns. Probably a more bloodthirsty cut-throat in the name of religion never existed. He caused the death of not less than one hundred thousand men, women, and children.

The Massacre of St. Bartholomew was probably the most wanton waste of blood, the most fiendish wholesale slaughter for so short a period of time, ever connected with any system of religion. Within three days the zealots of the parent church in the city of Paris, in 1572, slaughtered sixty thousand Huguenots. The streets were in many places choked with dead bodies. The Seine was literally filled with them, and blood and putrifying carcasses were everywhere.

A papist suggested that considerable money might be realized by the fat from the dead bodies, and many of the plumpest ones were cut up and rendered like pork, and much grease thus extracted, which sold for a large price. The same murderous spirit pervaded the larger part of France. In Lyons four thousand were slaughtered in a similar manner. In the whole country it is said that more than one hundred thousand men, women, and children were thus cruelly murdered. History offers no parallel to it. But the Christians were jubilant over the slaughter. When the news reached Rome, Pope Gregory XIII. was filled with unbounded joy. Rome rang with rejoicings. The guns of the Castle of Angelo gave forth a joyous salute. Bells sounded from every tower and bonfires blazed in every street, and through all the hours of the night. Gregory, attended by a churchly retinue, visited the church of St. Louis, where the Cardinal of Lorraine chanted a *Te Deum* in thanks for the heavenly work that had been performed. The pope also ordered a medal to be struck to commemorate the glorious Christian achievement.

The same persecuting spirit also found much encouragement in England. There had been many executions and persecutions for religious views during the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries; but it was not until the pious "Bloody Mary" came to the throne of England that the killing for opinion's sake reached its highest point. She had received a religious education, and when power came into her hands she must needs act upon the godly instruction she had received. She reigned less than six years, but in that time she signed many death-warrants and sent many a worthy person to an untimely grave. Among those who were executed for their religious views in her reign were John Rogers, Laurence Saunders, Bishop Hooper, Dr. Rowland Taylor, Thomas Tomkins, William Hunter, William Pigot, Stephen Knight, John Lawrence, Thomas Higbed, Thomas Causton, Dr. Robert Farrar, Rawlins White, Rev. George Marsh, Margaret Polley, Rev. Robert Samuel, William Allen, Thomas Cob, Roger Coe, Robert Glover, Cornelius Bonge, Bishop Latimer, Archbishop Cranmer, William Wolsey, Robert Pigot, Bishop Ridley, John Webb, George Roper,

Gregory Park, William Weisman, John Philpot, James Gore, John Maundrel, William Coberly, John Spicer, Richard and Thomas Spurg, John Cavill, George Ambrose, Robert Drake, William Tims, John Fortune, Dr. Parker, John Foster, John Careless, Julius Palmer, John Groin, Thomas Askine, Catherine Cawlher, and many others. Nearly three hundred persons were sent to the stake, scaffold, or beheading-block by the orders of herself and her religious instructors and advisers.

Under Queen Elizabeth, the sister of Bloody Mary, the tables were turned; the Protestants came into power, and consequently the Catholics had to go to the wall—the torture-room, the block, and the stake. She was not as bloodthirsty as her sister before her, but the course of persecution did not materially slacken in her reign. The torture-rack and numerous other cruel instruments were introduced into England in her reign, and large numbers were persecuted because of their convictions, and nearly three hundred were executed in the name of religion.

The following letter by the late William Cobbet, respecting Protestant persecutions in England in the time of "Good Queen Bess," will show the reader what Protestant toleration was in the golden age of Queen Elizabeth:

My Lord: I have read the report of your lordship's speech made on the 4th inst. on the second reading of the Catholic bill, and there is one passage of it on which I think it my duty thus publicly to remark. The passage to which I allude relates to the *character* of the *law-established church*, and also to the probable fate that will, in consequence of this bill, attend her in Ireland.

Now, with very sincere respect for your lordship, I do think it my duty to the people of this country to show that the character which you have given to the church of England, as by *law* established, is not correct; to show that she is not, and never has been, *tolerant in matters of religion*; and is not, and never has been, *favorable to civil liberty*. In short, with most sincere respect for your lordship, with greater respect for you than I ever had for any public functionary in England, and with the greatest admiration of your conduct in your high and important office—with all these, I think it my duty "flatly to contradict" your lordship with regard to the character of this church, and especially in the two particulars mentioned by you. I do not charge you with insincerity; for why should you not be in error as to this matter, when I know that "twenty or thirty years ago" I myself should, in a similar case, have said just what you have now said on this subject? Nevertheless, it being error, and gross error too, and I "knowing it to be error," am bound in duty to my readers to expose the error;

and I am more strictly bound because this error coming from you is more likely to be widely spread.

First, then, my lord, let us take your proposition "that there is no church so tolerant as this." I am sure your lordship has never read her history; I am sure you have not. If you had you never would have uttered these words. Not being content to deal in general terms, I will not say she has been, and was from the outset, the most intolerant church that the world ever saw; that she started at first armed with halters, ripping-knives, axes, and racks; that her footsteps were marked with blood, while her back bent under the plunder of her innumerable innocent victims; and that for refinement in cruelty and extent of rapacity she never had an equal, whether corporate or sole. I will not thus speak of her in general terms, but I will lay before your lordship some historical *facts*, to make good that *contradiction* which I have given to your words. I assert that the law-church is the most INTOLERANT church I ever read or heard of; and this assertion I now proceed to make good.

This church began to exist in 1547, and in the reign of Edward VI. Until now the religion of the country had been for several years under the tyrant Henry VIII., a sort of mongrel; but now it became wholly Protestant by LAW. The Articles of Religion and the Common Prayer-book were now drawn up, and were established by acts of Parliament. The Catholic altars were pulled down in all the churches; the priests, on pain of ouster and fine, were compelled to teach the new religion, that is to say, to be apostates; and the people who had been born and bred Catholics not only punished if they heard mass, but were also punished if they did not go to hear the new parsons; that is, if they refused to become apostates. The people, smarting under this tyranny, rose in insurrection in several parts, and, indeed, all over the country. They complained that they had been robbed of their religion, and of the relief to the poor which the old church gave; and they demanded that the mass and the monasteries should be restored, and that the priests should not be allowed to marry. And how were they answered? The bullet and bayonet at the hands of German troops slaughtered a part, caused another part to be imprisoned and flogged, and the remainder to submit outwardly at least, to the law-church. And now mark this tolerant and merciful church. Many of the old monastics and priests, who had been expelled from their convents and livings, were compelled to beg their bread about the country, and thus found subsistence among the pious Catholics. This was an eye-sore to the law-church, who deemed the very existence of these men who refused to apostatize a libel on her. Therefore, in company, actually in company with the law that founded the new church, came forth a law to punish beggars, by burning them in the face with a red-hot iron, and by making them slaves for two years, with power in their masters to make them wear an iron collar. Your lordship must have read this act of Parliament, passed in the first year of the first Protestant reign, and coming forth in company with the Common Prayer-book. This was tolerant work, to be sure; and fine proof we have here of this church being "favorable to civil and religious liberty." Not content with stripping these faithful Catholic priests of their livings, not content with turning them out upon the wide world, this tolerant church must cause them to perish with hunger or be branded slaves.

Such was the tolerant spirit of this church when she was young. As to her

burnings under Cranmer (who made the Prayer-book), they are hardly worthy of particular notice, when we have before us the sweeping cruelties of this first Protestant reign, during which, short as it was, the people of England suffered so much that the suffering actually thinned their numbers; it was a people partly destroyed, and that, too, in the space of about six years; and this is acknowledged even in acts of Parliament of that day. But this law-church was established in reality during the reign of Elizabeth, which lasted forty-five years; that is, from 1558 to 1603; and though this church has always kept up its character, even to the present day, its deeds during this long reign are the most remarkable.

Elizabeth established what she called "a court of high commission," consisting chiefly of bishops of your lordship's "most tolerant church," in order to punish all who did not conform to her religious creed, she being "the head of the church." This commission was empowered to have control over the "opinions" of all men, and to punish all men according to their "discretion, short of death." They had power to extort evidence by the prison or by the rack. They had power to compel a man (on oath) to "reveal his thoughts" and to "accuse his friend, brother, parent, wife, or child;" and this, too, on "pain of death." These monsters, in order to "discover priests," and to crush the old religion, "fined, imprisoned, racked," and did such things as would have made Nero shudder to think of. They sent hundreds to the rack in order to get from them confessions, "on which confessions many of them were put to death."

I have not room to make even an enumeration of the deeds of religious persecutions during this long and "tolerant" reign; but I will state a few of them:

1. It was *death* to make a new Catholic priest within the kingdom.
2. It was *death* for a Catholic priest to come into the kingdom from abroad.
3. It was *death* to harbor a Catholic priest coming from abroad.
4. It was *death* to confess to such a priest.
5. It was *death* for any priest to say mass.
6. It was *death* for any one to hear mass.
7. It was *death* to *deny*, or *not to swear*, if called on, that this woman was the head of the church of Christ.
8. It was an offense (punishable by heavy fine) *not to go to the Protestant church*. This fine was £20 a *lunar month*, or £250 a year, and of our present money £3,250 a year. Thousands upon thousands refused to go to the law-church; and thus the *head* of the church sacked thousands upon thousands of estates! The poor conscientious Catholics who refused to go to the "most tolerant church," and who had no money to pay fines, were crammed into the jails until the counties petitioned to be relieved from keeping them. They were then discharged, being first publicly whipped and having their ears bored with a red-hot iron. But this very great "toleration" not answering the purpose, an act was passed to banish for life all these non-goers to church, if they were not worth twenty pounds; and, in case of return, they were to be punished with death.

I am, my lord, not making loose assertions here; I am all along stating from acts of Parliament, and the above form a small sample of the whole, and this your lordship must know well. I am not declaiming, but relating undeniable facts; with facts of the same character, with a *bare list*, made in the above man-

ner, I could fill a considerable volume. The names of the persons put to death merely for being Catholics, during this long and dreary reign, would, especially if we were to include Ireland, form a list ten times as long as that of our army and navy, both taken together. The usual mode of inflicting death was to hang the victim for a short time, just to benumb his or her faculties, then cut down and instantly rip open the belly and tear out the heart, and hold it up, fling the bowels into the fire, then chop off the head and cut the body into quarters, then boil the head and quarters, and then hang them up at the gates of cities, or other conspicuous places. This was done, including Ireland, to many hundreds of persons, merely for adhering to the church in which they had been born and bred. There were one hundred and eighty-seven ripped up and boiled in England in the years from 1577 to 1603: that is to say, in the last twenty-six years of Elizabeth's reign; and these might all have been spared if they would have agreed to go to church and hear the common prayer! All, or nearly all of them were racked before they were put to death; and the cruelties in prison, and the manner of execution, were the most horrible that can be conceived. They were flung into dungeons, kept in their filth, and fed on bullock's liver, boiled and unwashed tripe, and such things as dogs are fed on. Edward Genings, a priest, detected in saying mass in Holborn, was after sentence of death offered his pardon if he would go to church; but having refused to do this, and having at the place of execution boldly said that he would die a hundred deaths rather than acknowledge the queen to be the spiritual head of the church, Topcliffe, the attorney-general, ordered the rope to be cut the moment the victim was turned off, "so that," says this historian, "the priest being little or nothing stunned, stood on his feet casting his eyes toward heaven, till the hangman tripped up his heels and flung him on the block, where he was ripped up and quartered." He was so much alive, even after the boweling, that he cried with a loud voice, "Oh it smarts!" And then he exclaimed, "*Sancte Gregorie, ora pro me,*" while the hangman, having sworn a most wicked oath, cried, "Zounds! his heart is in my hand, and yet Gregory is in his mouth!"

This "tolerance" of the law-church was shown toward women as well as toward men. There was a Mrs. Ward, who for assisting a priest to escape from prison (the crime of that priest being saying mass) was imprisoned, flogged, racked, and finally hanged, ripped up, and quartered. She was executed at Tyburn on the 30th of August, 1588. At her trial the judges asked if she had done the thing laid to her charge. She said "Yes!" and that she was happy to ~~reflect~~ that she had been the means of "delivering that innocent lamb from the hands of those bloody wolves." They in vain endeavored to terrify her into a confession relative to the place whither the priest had gone; and when they found threats unavailing, they promised her pardon if she would go to church; but she answered that she would lose many lives if she had them rather than acknowledge the heretical church. They therefore treated her very savagely, and ripped her up while in her senses.

There was a Mrs. Clitherow pressed to death at York in the year 1556. She was a lady of good family, and her crime was relieving and harboring priests. She refused to plead, that she might not tell a lie nor expose others to danger. She was therefore pressed to death in the following manner: She was laid on the floor on her back. Her hands and feet were bound down as close as possi-

ble; then a great door was laid upon her, and many hundred weights placed upon that door. Sharp stones were put under her back, and the weights, pressing upon her body, first broke her ribs, and finally, though by no means quickly, extinguished life. Her husband was forced to flee the country; her little children, who wept for their dear, good mother, were taken up, and being questioned concerning their religious belief, and answering as they were taught by her, were severely whipped, and the eldest, who was but twelve years old, was cast into prison.

Need I go on, my lord? Twenty large volumes, allotting only one page to each case, would not, if we were to include Ireland, contain an account of those who have fallen victims to their refusal to conform to this "most tolerant church in the world." Nay, a hundred volumes, each volume being five hundred pages, and one page allowed to each victim, would not suffice for the holding of this bloody record. Short of death by ripping up, there was death by marshal law, death in prison (and this in cases without number), banishment, and loss of estate.

Doctor Bridgewater, in a tale published by himself at the end of the "*Concertatio Ecclesiæ Catholicæ*," gives the names of about 1200 who had suffered in this way before the year 1558—that is to say, before the heat of the "tolerance." In this list there were 21 bishops, 120 monastics, 13 deans, 14 archdeacons, 60 prebendaries, 530 priests, 49 doctors of divinity, 18 doctors of law, 15 masters of colleges, 8 earls, 10 barons, 26 knights, 326 gentlemen, 60 ladies and gentlewomen. Many of these, and indeed the greater part of them, died in prison, and many of them died while under sentence of death.

There, my lord, I do not think that you will question the truth of this statement; and if you cannot, I hope you will allow that no lover of truth and justice ought to be silent while reports of speeches are circulating calling this "the most tolerant church in the world." But, my lord, why need I, in addressing myself to you on this subject, do more than refer you to the cruel, the savage, the bloody penal code? Leaving poor half-minded Ireland out of the question, what have I to do in answer to the praises of this church and your assertion as to its tolerance but to request you to remember the enactments in the following acts of Elizabeth, the head and the establisher of this church? Stat. i, ch. 1 and 2; stat. v, chap. 1; stat. xii, ch. 2; stat. xxiii, ch. 1; stat. xxvii, ch. 2; stat. xxix, ch. 6; stat. xxxv, ch. 1 and 2? What have I to do, my lord, but to request you to look at, or rather to call to mind, those laws of plunder and of blood; fine, fine, fine; banish, banish, banish; or, death, death, death, in every line? Your lordship knows that this is true; you know that all these horrors, all this hellish tyranny, the whole arose out of a desire to make this Protestant church predominant. How, then, can this Protestant church be called "the most tolerant in the world?" I have here given a mere sample of the doings of this law-church. I have not taken your lordship to Ireland, half-murdered Ireland; nor have I even hinted at many acts done in England during Elizabeth's reign, each of which would have excited the indignation of every virtuous man on earth; but I must not omit to mention two traits of tolerance in this church: First, Edward VI was advised to "bring his sister Mary to trial," and of course to punishment, for not conforming to the law-church; and she was saved only by the menaces of her cousin, the Emperor Charles V. Second,

when Mary, Queen of Scotland, had been condemned to die, she, though she earnestly sued for it, was not allowed to have a priest to perform the religious offices deemed so necessary in such cases. They brought the Protestant Dean of Peterborough to pray by or with her, but she would not hear him. When her head fell upon the block the Dean exclaimed: "So let our queen's enemies perish!" And the Earl of Kent responded, "Amen!" Baker, in his Chronicle, page 273, says that the death of this queen was earnestly desired, because "that if she lived, the religion received in England could not subsist."

This church has been no changeling; she has been of the same character from the day of her establishment to the present hour. In Ireland her deeds have surpassed those of Mohammed; but it would take a large volume to put down a bare list of her intolerant deeds. She at last, however, seems to be nearly at the end of her tether; the nation has always been making sacrifices to her haughty predominances. Boulogne and Calais were the first sacrifices; "poor rates," an "enormous debt," a "standing army," and a "civil list" have followed; all, yea, all, to be ascribed to the predominance of this church, and her haughty spirit of ascendancy. But now the nation has made so many and such great sacrifices to her that "it can make no more." It cannot venture on "another civil war" (about the twentieth) in order to support the ascendancy of this church; and be you assured, my lord, that that hierarchy in Ireland, to uphold which you seem so very anxious, is not much longer to be upheld by any power on earth, seeing that all the miseries of Ireland, all of them, without a single exception, are to be traced directly to that hierarchy; and in these miseries "England sees terrific danger."

The case is very plain. The opponents of the Catholic bill say, We dislike it because it exposes the church, and especially "the Irish church," to imminent "danger." The answer of the Duke is, I cannot prevent this danger without "risking a civil war," and the state cannot afford that. The law church might reply, Why, there have been many civil wars carried on for the purpose of upholding my ascendancy; but to that the Duke might rejoin, Very true; but we have now a paper-money system (also made to uphold you) "which cannot live in civil war," and the death of which may produce that of the state itself; and, therefore, you must now be left to support your ascendancy by your talents, piety, zeal, charity, humility, and sound doctrine. This is the true state of the case, my lord, and therefore, unless the church can support itself by these means, it is manifestly destined to fall.

I am your lordship's most obedient servant.

Persecutions in the name of Witchcraft have been a deep and damning disgrace to Christianity. The command, Ex. xxii, 18, "Thou shall not suffer a witch to live," has been the authority, especially in Christian countries, upon which many thousands of unfortunate people have been tortured most inhumanly, and consigned to ignominy and most painful deaths. Christianity has indeed furnished a most prolific source for the species of mental disease known as witchcraft. It of course requires

ignorant people, filled with superstition, to believe in witches and their power. This belief has prevailed more or less in nearly all countries, but the savages of Africa and the people of Christendom have gone to greater excesses in believing in witchcraft and in punishing witches than any other people.

This delusion manifested itself in Europe early in the fourteenth century, and for nearly three hundred years it was a cruel scourge to the people of those lands. The heads of the church placed witchcraft and heresy upon the same level, and both were regarded as the work of the devil. Popes issued their bulls, pronunciamientos, and excommunications against both, and both equally furnished food for the halter and the flame. Supposed witches and heretics were most cruelly persecuted; both had the severest tortures applied to them. Of course Catholics were the first in persecuting witches, but the Protestants were good at following suit in that kind of persecution as well as in others. They have shown themselves apt scholars in all devices and policies where mercilessness and cruelty were essential considerations. What the poor witches, supposed to be bewitched, have suffered from both Catholic and Protestant Christians can never be known. It is impossible to arrive, with any degree of accuracy, at the number of people put to death as witches in the nearly four centuries in which the church authorities nearly became insane upon the subject, but the number at all events comes up among the thousands; and it is one of the saddest phases of Christian persecution. The panic was also conveyed to America, and a considerable number were arrested, tried, and punished, and several were put to death in Salem, Massachusetts, and other places. Fortunately that species of delirium has nearly passed away, but it has left a dark stain on the escutcheon of Christianity.

The Protestant persecutions in Ireland present another black chapter in the history of Christian cruelties. The Tudors, Plantagenets, and Stuarts of England all showed themselves implacable foes of the Irish, and Oliver Cromwell, *par excellence* a religious man, far outdid them all. He and his "troopers"—who were saints as well as soldiers—carried out Calvin's decree by racking houses and towns, destroying

the churches, and burning women and children. Churches were sometimes burnt with all the men, women, and children they well could contain, who fled there for safety. The papists when they had the power in Ireland were equally as relentless and bloodthirsty as the Protestants. There is probably very little to choose between them. Among the incidents of Catholic persecutions in Ireland, Fox gives the following :

In the Castle of Lisgool upwards of one hundred and fifty men, women, and children were all burnt together. At the Castle of Moneah not less than one hundred were put to the sword. Great numbers were also murdered at the Castle of Tullah by McGuire, who proved false to his promises to give them protection. Many were put to deaths of the most horrid nature in many other places. Some were laid with the center of their backs on the axletree of a carriage, with their legs resting on the ground on one side and their arms and head on the other. While in this position, one of the savage persecutors whipped the wretched objects on the thighs, legs, etc., with heavy scourges, while others set on furious dogs who tore to pieces the arms and upper parts of the body, and in this dreadful manner they were deprived of life.

Great numbers were fastened to horses' tails, and the beasts being started off at full gallop by their riders, the wretched victims were drawn along upon the ground until they expired in dreadful agony. Others were hung on lofty gibbets, and a fire being kindled under them they finished their lives partly by hanging and partly by heat and suffocation. The female sex by no means escaped the least particle of cruelty measured out to their more hardy brothers that could be devised by their heartless tormentors and murderers. Women of all ages were put to deaths of the most cruel nature. Some were fastened with their backs to strong posts, and, being stripped to the waist, the inhuman monsters cut off their right breasts with shears, which of course put them in the most excruciating agony, and in this condition they were left till, from loss of blood and excessive pain, they expired. In some instances unborn infants were torn from their mothers in the most inhuman manner. Many unhappy mothers were hung naked to the branches of trees, and their bodies being cut open and

the innocent offspring taken from them and thrown to dogs and swine; and to increase the horror of the scene the husband would be compelled to be a witness of the fiendish deed.

At the town of Lissenskeath over one hundred Scottish victims were hanged, receiving no more mercy than the English. More than one thousand men, women, and children were driven in different companies to Portendown Bridge, which was broken in the center, and there compelled to throw themselves into the water. Those who were able to swim to the shore and attempted to do so were knocked on the head with clubs and killed. In this way at least four thousand persons were drowned in different localities in the same part of the country.

In one place one hundred and forty victims were driven many miles stark naked in the most severe weather, and were all murdered on the same spot, some being hanged, some burnt, some shot, and many buried alive. The murderers would not even allow them time to pray before they were dispatched.

In Killoman forty-eight families were massacred, twenty-two of whom were burnt in one house, the others being hung, shot, or drowned. In Killomore over two hundred families fell victims to the rage of the same character of demons. Some were confined in stocks until they divulged where their money was secreted, when they were dispatched at once. The whole country was one scene of butchery, and the number of those who were killed in various ways amounted to many thousands. Besides this, large numbers were kept in the most filthy dungeons; they had hardly food enough to keep them from starvation. Many were thus literally starved to death, while held down by large stones and other heavy weights.

In the county of Antrim nine hundred and fifty-four persons were murdered in one morning in the name of religion, and twelve hundred more were put to death in the same county and for the same cause afterward. In a town called Sisnegary twenty-four persons were forced into a building, which was then set on fire. The inhuman persecutors mocked

the shrieks of the dying sufferers, and danced and laughed in derision. Many young children were taken by the heels and their brains dashed out on a stone before their mothers' eyes, and then she thrown into the river and drowned, or her bowels ripped open with a knife.

In Kilkenny all the heretics were put to death, and that by the most cruel modes that could be devised. One woman was beaten most unmercifully and until several bones were broken, when she was thrown into a filthy ditch. Her daughter, six years of age, was then ripped open with a knife and thrown to her mother, where the two died together.

The father of a family was sawed asunder, the throat of the wife cut, and the brains of all the children dashed out. The youngest was thrown to the hogs, which readily devoured it.

In Munster several ministers were put to death in a very cruel manner. One was stripped naked and driven before his persecutors and pricked and stabbed with swords and pikes till he fell exhausted and expired. In many instances the eyes were gouged out, or the hands cut off, and the sufferers left in that condition.

These unhappy people were often forced to kill their relatives and nearest friends. One young man was compelled to kill his father and was then immediately hung. A woman was forced to kill her husband and then her son made to kill her, when he was put to death.

At a place called Glasgow some forty Protestants, under assurance of mercy and protection, were induced by priests to acknowledge the church of Rome, and then treacherously put to death, the priests saying they were then in the right faith, and lest they should fall from it they were cruelly murdered.

In Tipperary large numbers of Protestants—men, women, and children—were most cruelly murdered. They were stripped naked and pounded with bludgeons, stones, pole-axes, and other weapons. In Queen county it was the same way. Hundreds were put to death in the most shocking manner. Fifty or sixty unfortunate wretches were shut up in a house and it fired. All were burnt to death.

In the county of Mayo the same diabolical spirit ran riot. At one time sixty persons, among whom were fifteen ministers,

were promised protection by Edmund Burke and his soldiers, and safe conveyance to Galway ; but Burke treacherously drew his sword as a sign to his men, when the whole sixty were brutally murdered.

Many were stripped naked and fastened to horses and dragged through bogs till dead. Some were hung by the feet on tenter-hooks, driven into poles, and left in that condition till life was extinct.

Others were fastened to the trunks of trees with a branch over their heads, and over this one arm was fastened, supporting the body. One leg was fastened to the trunk of the body and the other left in its natural position. In this way they were left till dead, and often long afterward.

At Clownes seventeen men were burnt alive, and a father, mother, five children, and a servant-maid were all hung and then their bodies flung into a ditch. Many were hung to trees by one arm with stones tied to their feet. Others were hung up by the middle of the body and left till death came to their relief.

Many were hung on windmills, and before they were dead their bodies were hacked and gashed with swords and knives. Large numbers were badly cut and gashed and left on the ground to die in their gore. Men, women, and children were often hung by the hair of their heads and left in that wretched condition to die.

In the county of Tyrone no less than three hundred persons were drowned in one day, besides large numbers hung, burnt, and in other ways killed.

These religious bloody persecutors and murderers admitted to Dr. Maxwell, rector of Tyrone, that at Glynwood they had destroyed twelve thousand men, women, and children, who were trying to make their flight from that part of the country.

More than one thousand wretched and defenseless people were forced into the river Bann and drowned.

Many hundreds of these people, who lived in Armagh, were promised safe conduct to Coleraine, but while on the way, when about half way there, the Christian guards brutally attacked them and slaughtered the entire number.

To reverse the picture again, it will be seen that, when the

Protestants were in power, they persecuted the papists in the same spirit of bloodthirstiness that the latter had extended to them. In the time of Queen Elizabeth, Catholic Archbishop Caskel was taken by the queen's forces to Dublin in 1582. Here the Protestant primate Loftus besieged him for months to repudiate Romanism and attach himself to the church of England. The archbishop, however, proving himself unyielding in his faith, was finally brought out on Stephen's Green for martyrdom. There he was tied to a tree, his boots filled with combustibles, and his limbs stripped and smeared with oil and alcohol, which were lighted, making a very hot flame. The fire was alternately quenched and lighted, in order to prolong his sufferings as long as possible. In this way his tortures were kept up several successive days. Still remaining firm, before the dawn of the fifth day his inhuman tormentors finally burnt him outright, thus squelching his remaining life out of him, and left his calcined bones among the ashes on the ground.

The Catholics had secreted some valued relics in a half-ruined church at St. Kevin, near that outlet of Dublin called Kevinsport. In Desmond's town of Kilmalloch there were taken Patrick O'Hely, bishop of Mayo, Father Cornelius, a Franciscan, and some others. To extort from them confessions of the new faith, their thighs were broken with hammers and their arms crushed by levers. They died without yielding, and the instruments of their torture were buried with them in the Franciscan convent of Askeaton.

The most Rev. Richard Creagh was the next victim. Failing to convict him in Ireland of the imputed crime of violating a young woman, who herself exposed the calumny and suffered for so doing, they brought him to London, where he was killed by poison October 14, 1585.

It was getting most too late in the seventeenth century for prosecuting murder, slaughter, and massacre as vigorously as in the years before; but the laws which the Protestants enacted for the Catholics to observe were done in the same unfair and cruel spirit which had prompted the tens of thousands of murders that had been inhumanly committed. The Catholic population were disfranchised, and one enactment

after another was passed depriving them almost of the bare right of existence. They were deprived of the privilege of practicing in the courts, of acting as teachers for either Catholics or Protestants, of sitting on a jury, of acting as a justice of the peace or sheriff, or even as a clerk in any capacity. A Catholic was not permitted to marry a Protestant, and any priest who celebrated such a marriage was to be hanged. The Catholics were deprived of six-sevenths of the land by iniquitous confiscations, and every acre of the small moiety left was begrudged them by the Protestants. No non-conforming Catholic could buy land, or receive by descent, devise, or settlement, or lend money on it as security. If a Catholic owned a horse worth more than five pounds, any Protestant might take it away.

These additional unjust Irish penal laws are taken from an article published in the *Metropolitan Record* for March 12, 1859:

"If a Catholic, whether child or adult, attended in Ireland a school kept by a Catholic, or was privately instructed by a Catholic, such person, though a child in its early infancy, incurred a forfeiture of all its property, present or future.

"If a Catholic child, however young, was sent to any foreign country for education, such infant incurred a similar penalty—a forfeiture of all right to property, present or prospective.

"If any person in Ireland made remittance of any money or goods for the maintenance of any Irish child educated in a foreign country, such person incurred similar forfeiture."

With respect to the Catholic church the reforming civilizers enacted:

"To teach the Catholic religion is declared a felony, punishable by transportation.

"To be a Catholic monk or friar is punishable by banishment; and to return from the banishment an act of high treason, to be punished by death.

"To exercise the functions of a Catholic bishop or archbishop in Ireland is a transportable offense, and to return from banishment as such, an act of high treason, punished by being

hanged and afterward quartered by the executioner." And others of the same kind.

After an acquaintance of about five hundred years the English government thought that her military, naval, and civil service, both in Ireland and abroad, would be best promoted by legislation, such as the following:

"Catholics were declared incapable of holding any commission in the army or navy, or serving even as private soldiers, unless they abjured that religion.

"Catholics were universally excluded from all offices under the state, and deprived of the right of voting at any election.

"Catholics were excluded from Parliament.

"If any Catholic purchased for money an estate in land, any Protestant might take it from him without paying a farthing of the purchase money.

"Edmund Burke, speaking of the code, said, 'It was a machine of wise and elaborate contrivance, and as well fitted for the oppression, impoverishment, and degradation of a people, and the debasement in them of human nature itself, as ever proceeded from the perverted ingenuity of man.'"

But these persecutions did not stop in Ireland; they raged in England, Scotland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Bavaria, France, Spain, Portugal, Holland, and every country where the Christian religion had sway. It mattered little which branch of the church was in power, the one having rule was ever ready to persecute unto death. All the infernal inventions of cruelty and torture that the demoniacal mind of man was capable of inventing were marshaled into use, and Catholics and Protestants always vied with each other to see which could be the most bloodthirsty, inhuman, and merciless.

The Quakers and the Puritans for a long time suffered from the heavy hand of oppression in England. They became well acquainted with the prison, the dungeon, the stake, and the beheading-block, and they fain would escape to the hospitable shores of the western continent to gain the privilege of enjoying liberty of thought on the subject of religion. But strange to say, those persecuted Christians who fled from England's shores to seek freedom of thought in the wilds

of America, soon after they arrived here became nearly as bitter persecutors as were those who drove them from their native land. This seems to have been the rule with Christians of all types and shades for the last fifteen hundred years. They have been incapable of being tolerant and generous toward those who differ from them in religious belief. Whenever they have had the power they have evinced the disposition to persecute and take life when their views have not been acceded to and duly respected. Yes, in the free land of America the spirit of persecution long held considerable sway, though civilization had become too far advanced to admit of that bloody rule which so long saturated the soil of all the countries of Europe. But several persons suffered death in New England, notably William Robinson, Marmaduke Stephenson, Mary Dyer, William Leddra, with others. Besides this there was not a little imprisoning, whipping, fining, branding with hot irons, cropping the ears, boring the tongue with red-hot irons, confiscating goods, driving men, women, and children into the forests in the winter to perish with cold and starvation. All these and much more were performed by devout Christian bigots in our own happy land. But why dwell upon this unpleasant theme? It makes one disgusted with the very best phases of humanity to review what enormous crimes it has committed in the name of the religion of Jesus.

In view of all this heart-rending subject, Ingersoll most truly and forcibly says: "Men and women have been burnt for thinking there is but one God; that there was none; that the Holy Ghost is younger than God; that God was somewhat older than his son; for insisting that good works will save a man without faith; that faith will do without good works; for declaring that a sweet babe will not be burnt eternally because its parents failed to have its head wet by a priest; for speaking of God as though he had a nose; for denying that Christ was his own father; for contending that three persons rightly added together make more than one; for believing in purgatory; for denying the reality of hell; for pretending that priests can forgive sins; for preaching that God is an essence; for denying that witches rode through

the air on sticks; for doubting the total depravity of the human heart; for laughing at irresistible grace, predestination, and particular redemption; for denying that good bread could be made of the body of a dead man; for pretending that the pope was not managing this world for God, and in the place of God; for disputing the efficacy of a vicarious atonement; for thinking the Virgin Mary was born like other people; for thinking that a man's rib was hardly sufficient to make a good-sized woman; for denying that God used his finger for a pen; for asserting that prayers are not answered; that diseases are not sent to punish unbelief; for denying the authority of the Bible; for having a Bible in their possession; for attending mass and for refusing to attend; for wearing a surplice; for carrying a cross, and for refusing; for being a Catholic, and for being a Protestant; for being an Episcopalian, a Presbyterian, a Baptist, and for being a Quaker. In short, every virtue has been a crime, and every crime a virtue. The church has burnt honesty and rewarded hypocrisy, and all this she did because it was commanded by a book—a book that men had been taught implicitly to believe long before they knew one word that was in it. They had been taught that to doubt the truth of this book—to examine it even—was a crime of such enormity that it could not be forgiven either in this world or in the next.

“Give any orthodox church the power, and to-day they would punish heresy with whip and chain and fire. As long as the church deems a certain belief essential to salvation, just so long it will kill and burn, if it has the power. Why should the church pity a man whom her God hates? Why should she show mercy to a kind and noble heretic whom her God will burn in eternal fire? Why should a Christian be better than his God? It is impossible for the imagination to conceive a greater atrocity than has been perpetrated by the church. From Augustine until now the spirit of the Christians has remained the same. There has been the same intolerance, the same undying hatred of all who think for themselves, and the same determination to crush out of the human brain all knowledge inconsistent with an ignorant creed.

"In 1208 the Inquisition was established. Seven years afterward the fourth council of the Lateran enjoined all kings and rulers to swear an oath that they would exterminate heretics from their dominions. The sword of the church was unsheathed, and the world was at the mercy of ignorant and infuriated priests, whose eyes feasted upon the agonies they inflicted. Acting, as they believed, or pretended to believe, under the command of God, stimulated by the hope of infinite reward in another world, hating heretics with every drop of their bestial blood, savage beyond description, merciless beyond conception, these infamous priests, in a kind of frenzied joy, leaped upon the helpless victims of their rage. They crushed their bones in iron boots, tore their quivering flesh with iron hooks and pincers, cut off their lips and eyelids, pulled out their nails, and into the bleeding quick thrust needles; tore out their tongues, extinguished their eyes, stretched them upon racks, flayed them alive, crucified them with their heads downward, exposed them to wild beasts, burned them at the stake, mocked their cries and groans, ravished their wives, robbed their children, and then prayed God to finish the holy work in hell. Millions upon millions were sacrificed upon the altars of bigotry. The Catholic burnt the Lutheran, the Lutheran burnt the Catholic; the Episcopalian tortured the Presbyterian, the Presbyterian tortured the Episcopalian. Every denomination killed all it could of every other, and each Christian felt in duty bound to exterminate every other Christian who denied the smallest fraction of his creed. According to the creed of every church, slavery leads to heaven, liberty leads to hell. It was claimed that God had founded the church, and that to deny the authority of the church was to be a traitor to God, and consequently an ally of the devil. To torture and destroy one of the soldiers of Satan was a duty no good Christian cared to neglect. Nothing can be sweeter than to earn the gratitude of God by killing your own enemies. Such a mingling of profit and revenge, of heaven for yourself and damnation for those you dislike, is a temptation that your ordinary Christian never resists.

"For thousands of years a thinker was hunted down like an escaped convict. To him who had braved the church every door was shut, every knife was open. To shelter him from the wild storm, to give him a crust when dying, to put a cup of water to his cracked and bleeding lips, these were all crimes, not one of which the church ever did forgive, and with the justice taught of her God, his helpless children were exterminated as scorpions and vipers."

In religious wars, in bloody, relentless, persistent, long-continued, and deadly persecutions, the devotees of Christianity have exceeded any other and all other religions in the world.

PERSECUTIONS OF INFIDELS AND FREETHINKERS.—Christians have not only distinguished themselves by burning, hanging, shooting, beheading, and drowning heretics, but in later years they have also showed themselves very expert in arresting, imprisoning, fining, and otherwise annoying the class of unbelievers usually called Freethinkers and Infidels. Among this number many have been brought to trial and imprisonment on false charges, as treason, blasphemy, obscenity, etc., when the real offense was disbelieving the dogmas of Christianity, and of speaking and writing accordingly. Some of these cases will be here given that it may be seen how in the process of evolution Christian persecution has changed its mode of conduct:

Rev. S. Johnson was whipped from Newgate to Tyburn, London, and pilloried, for blasphemy, December 1, 1683.

Mr. Patmon was brought to trial for having in his possession a copy of Paine's works, July 15, 1789.

Thomas Paine was tried for writing "Rights of Man," December 18, 1792.

Mr. Philips, a bookseller of London, was sent to prison for selling Paine's "Rights of Man," April 12, 1793.

Holt was convicted for selling Paine's "Rights of Man," July 31, 1793.

Messrs. Payne & Waldon were indicted for publishing Paine's works, July 17, 1793.

Messrs. Robinson Brothers were convicted for selling "Rights of Man," August 6, 1793.

A boy, or very young man, was sentenced to prison for being a believer in Thomas Paine, August 11, 1793.

Pearl & Bilcher, same year, were condemned for selling Paine's works.

J. Day was sentenced to prison for distributing Paine's portraits, October 18, 1793.

A man named Mealmaker was condemned for blasphemy in England and sentenced to fourteen years' transportation for advocating reform, January 18, 1798.

William Cobbett was sentenced for sedition, 1810.

D. I. Eaton was tried for publishing Paine's works, 1812.

Richard Carlile was convicted of blasphemy, 1819.

Seven persons were imprisoned for selling Carlile's publications, 1819.

Richard Carlile was convicted for publishing Paine's "Age of Reason," November 16, 1819.

T. Davidson was convicted of blasphemy, 1820.

Mrs. Jane Carlile was tried and imprisoned for selling her husband's liberal publications while he was in prison, 1821.

Miss Carlile, sister of Richard Carlile, when her brother was in prison, was tried for publishing Paine's works, 1821.

J. Watson was imprisoned for selling Palmer's "Principles," 1823.

Robert Taylor was convicted and imprisoned for blasphemy, 1827.

Richard Carlile was sent to prison for publishing the "Prompter," January 11, 1831.

Hetherington was imprisoned for publishing Hallam's Letters, 1840.

Charles Southwell was sentenced to prison for blasphemy, January 15, 1842.

George Jacob Holyoke was tried, convicted, and imprisoned on a charge of blasphemy, 1842.

W. Finlay was sent to prison for blasphemy, 1843.

Matilda Roulfe was imprisoned for blasphemy, 1844.

Edward Truelove was tried, convicted, and imprisoned for selling a radical work on physiology, 1878.

Charles Bradlaugh and Mrs. Annie Besant were brought to trial and convicted and fined for selling Dr. Charles Knowl-

ton's "Fruits of Philosophy," but escaped imprisonment on a flaw in the indictment. Mrs. Besant's young daughter, six years of age, was taken from her by decision of one of the London courts, on the ground of her being an Atheist.

The foregoing were all in England. We have had a somewhat similar and comparatively recent experience in the same line in our own country.

Abner Kneeland, founder of the "Boston Investigator," in June 1838, was tried, convicted, and sent to prison in Boston for simply saying he did "not believe in the same God the Universalists did." He was considerably advanced in life, and the imprisonment greatly broke him down in spirit and physical vigor.

E. B. Foote Sr. M. D., New York, was arrested at the instance of Anthony Comstock, member of the Young Men's Christian Association and agent for the religious Society for the Suppression of Vice, for sending in a sealed envelope such medical and physiological information as every physician is entitled to give his patients. He was convicted before Judge C. L. Benedict, in the United States Circuit Court. A fine of \$3,500 was imposed upon him in one count and the sentence upon the other reserved. It was a most gross outrage.

E. H. Heywood, of Princeton, Mass., in response to a decoy letter from Anthony Comstock under a forged name, mailed a copy of a small pamphlet called "Cupid's Yokes; or, the Binding Forces of Conjugal Life." He was tried before Judge Clarke, in the United States Circuit Court, in Boston, in 1878. The trial was a most unfair one, and he was convicted and sentenced to imprisonment two years with a fine of \$200. At the end of seven months President R. B. Hayes set him at liberty.

In November, 1877, D. M. Bennett, editor of "The Truth Seeker," the writer of these pages, was at the instance of Anthony Comstock arrested for sending through the United States mail a copy of two tracts—"An Open Letter to Jesus Christ," and "How Do Marsupials Propagate Their Kind?" In a few weeks, however, the case was dismissed by instruc-

tions from Washington. Comstock was angered at being thus foiled, and asserted that he would yet have Bennett in his power. In a few months he caused a second arrest of the Infidel Bennett for mailing a copy of Mr. Heywood's pamphlet. The trial was set for March, 1879, but was continued till the April term. The trial was before Judge C. L. Benedict, in the United States Circuit Court. His rulings were very severe against the accused, and virtually no evidence was admitted on the part of the defense. The charge to the jury was very partial. A conviction was a foregone conclusion. The "Open Letter to Jesus Christ" and "The Truth Seeker" were often held up before the Christian jury. Upon these more than upon Mr. Heywood's pamphlet was the conviction secured. The jury were out fifteen hours. One or more were in favor of acquittal, but finally the opposing ones yielded to the majority and returned a verdict of guilty. The sentence of thirteen months' imprisonment and a fine of \$300 was pronounced. He was soon taken to Ludlow-Street Jail. There he remained nearly two months, while a remarkable effort was made by his friends to secure his release. Petitions bearing the signatures of fully 200,000 persons were sent to the President, besides many thousands of private letters, asking for Bennett's pardon. Probably no petition bearing so many names was ever sent to any public officer before. But it was of no avail. The Christian element of the country made equal efforts to prevent a pardon. Bishops, priests, and laymen, women and Sunday-school children, petitioned and implored the President and his wife not to let him out of prison. They were the most numerous party; they had the most influence, and prevailed. The President being a cowardly time-server—more anxious to placate the Christian element than to perform an act of justice to an unpopular unbeliever—refused to interfere. Mr. C. K. Chase, an officer connected with the government, when visiting the prison, said to the writer, "Ah, Bennett, the church was too strong for you." Yes, the church has been too strong for many thousands of the poor victims to its cruel and unjust oppression. But truth and reason are gaining ground; intolerance and persecution must ultimately give way. Prisons for opinion's

sake must go with the Inquisition, the rack, the pulley, the ripping-knife, the gallows, the block, and the stake. The sentence is nearly served out, and the writer will soon be a free man once more. The intention in sentencing him to prison was to silence his voice and his pen in the cause of Freethought and in opposition to the dark and blighting superstitions of the past. But the intolerant persecutors have failed in their object. More writing has been done by the prisoner than had he retained his liberty, and it is hoped it may prove a benefit to the world, and to that extent this unjust imprisonment may prove really a blessing and not a curse.

A few more quotations from Ingersoll will be in order :

“Who at the present day can imagine the courage, the devotion to principle, the intellectual and moral grandeur, it once required to be an Infidel, to brave the church, her racks, her fagots, her dungeons, her tongues of fire; to defy and scorn her heaven and her hell, her devil and her God? They were the noblest sons of earth. They were the real saviors of our race—the destroyers of superstition and the creators of science. They were the real Titans who bared their grand foreheads to all the thunderbolts of all the gods. The church has been and still is the great robber. She has rifled not only the pockets but the brains of the world. She is the stone at the sepulcher of liberty, the upas tree in whose shade the intellect of man has withered, the gorgon beneath whose gaze the human heart has turned to stone.

“Christianity has always opposed every forward movement of the human race. Across the highway of progress it has always been building breastworks of Bibles, tracts, commentaries, prayer-books, creeds, dogmas, and platforms; and at every advance the Christians have gathered together behind those heaps of rubbish, and shot the poisoned arrows of malice at the soldiers of freedom.

“Through all the centuries gone, the mind of man has been beleaguered by the mailed hosts of superstition. Slowly and painfully has advanced the army of deliverance. Hated by those they wished to rescue, despised by those they were trying to save, these grand soldiers, these immortal deliverers,

have fought without thanks, labored without applause, suffered without pity, and they have died execrated and abhorred. For the good of mankind they accepted isolation, poverty, and calumny. They gave up all, sacrificed all, lost all but truth and respect.

"No effort has been, in any age of the world, spared to crush out opposition. The church used painting, music, and architecture simply to degrade mankind. But there are men that nothing can awe. There have been at all times brave spirits that dared even the gods. Some proud head has always been above the waves. In every age some Diogenes has sacrificed to all the gods. True genius never cowers, and there is always some Samson feeling for the pillars of authority.

"Cathedrals and domes, and chimes and chants, temples frescoed and grained, and carved and gilded with gold, altars and tapers, and paintings of Virgin and babe, censer and chalice, chasuble, paten, and alb, organs and anthems, and incense rising to the winged and blest, maniple, amice and stole, crosses and croziers, tiaras and crowns, miters and missals and masses, rosaries, relics, and robes, martyrs and saints, and windows stained as with the blood of Christ, never for one moment awed the brave, proud spirit of the Infidel. He knew that all the pomp and glitter had been purchased with liberty, that priceless jewel of the soul. In looking at the cathedral he remembered the dungeon. The music of the organ was not loud enough to drown the clank of fetters. He could not forget that the taper had lighted the fagot. He knew that the cross adorned the hilt of the sword, and so, where others worshiped, he wept and scorned.

"The doubter, the investigator, the Infidel, have been the saviors of liberty. This truth is beginning to be realized, and the truly intellectual are honoring the brave thinkers of the past. But the church is as unforgiving as ever, and still wonders why an Infidel should be wicked enough to endeavor to destroy her power.

"I will tell the church why. You have imprisoned the human mind; you have been the enemy of liberty; you have burnt us at the stake; wasted us upon slow fires; torn our

flesh with iron. You have covered us with chains, treated us as outcasts. You have filled the world with fear; you have taken our wives and children from our arms; you have confiscated our property; you have denied us the right to testify in courts of justice; you have branded us with infamy; you have torn out our tongues; you have refused us burial. In the name of your religion you have robbed us of every right, and after having inflicted upon us every evil that can be inflicted in this world, you have fallen upon your knees, and with clasped hands implored your God to torment us forever.

"Can you wonder that we hate your doctrines, that we despise your creeds, that we feel proud to know that we are beyond your power, that we are free in spite of you, that we can express our honest thought, and that the whole world is grandly rising into the blessed light?

"Can you wonder that we point with pride to the fact that Infidelity has ever been found battling for the rights of man, for the liberty of conscience, and for the happiness of all? Can you wonder that we are proud to know that we have always been disciples of reason and soldiers of freedom; that we have denounced tyranny and superstition, and have kept our hands unstained with human blood?

"We deny that religion is the end or object of this life; when it is so considered it becomes destructive of happiness—the real end of life. It becomes a hydra-headed monster, reaching in terrible coils from the heavens, and thrusting its thousand fangs into the bleeding, quivering hearts of men. It devours their substance, builds palaces for God (who dwells not in temples made with hands), and allows his children to die in huts and hovels. It fills the earth with mourning, heaven with hatred, the present with fear, and all the future with despair.

"Virtue is a subordination of the passions to the intellect. It is to act in accordance with your highest convictions. It does not consist in believing, but in doing. This is the sublime truth that the Infidels in all ages have uttered; they have handed the torch from one to the other through all the years that have fled. Upon the altar of reason they have

kept the sacred fire, and through the long midnight of faith they have fed the divine flame.

"Infidelity is liberty; all religion is slavery. In every creed man is the slave of God, woman is the slave of man, and the sweet children are the slaves of all. We do not want creeds; we want knowledge, we want happiness. And yet we are told by the church that we have accomplished nothing. That we are simply destroyers; that we tear down without building again. Is it nothing to free the mind? Is it nothing to civilize mankind? Is it nothing to fill the world with light, with discovery, with science? Is it nothing to dignify man, and exalt the intellect? Is it nothing to grope your way into the dreary prisons, the damp and dropping dungeons, the dark and silent cells of superstition, where the souls of men are chained to floors of stone; to greet them like a ray of light, like the song of a bird, the murmur of a stream; to see the dull eyes open and grow slowly bright, to feel yourself grasped by the shrunken and unused hands, and hear yourself thanked by a strange and hollow voice?

"Is it nothing to conduct these souls gradually into the blessed light of day, to let them see again the happy fields, the sweet green earth, and hear the everlasting music of the waves? Is it nothing to make men wipe the dust from their swollen knees, the tears from their blanched and furrowed cheeks? Is it a small thing to reave the heavens of an insatiate monster, and write upon the eternal dome, glittering with stars, the grand word FREEDOM?

"Is it a small thing to quench the flames of hell with the holy tears of pity, to unbind the martyr from the stake, break all the chains, put out the fires of civil war, stay the sword of the fanatic, and tear the bloody hands of the church from the white throat of science? Is it a small thing to make men truly free, to destroy the dogmas of ignorance, prejudice, and power, the poisoned fables of superstition, and drive from the beautiful face of the earth the fiend of fear?

"It does seem as though the most zealous Christian must at times entertain some doubt as to the divine origin of his religion. For eighteen hundred years the doctrine has been preached. For more than a thousand years the church had,

to a great extent, the control of the civilized world, and what has been the result? Are the Christian nations patterns of charity and forbearance? On the contrary, their principal business is to destroy each other. More than five millions of Christians are trained, educated, and drilled to murder their fellow-Christians. Every nation is groaning under a vast debt incurred in carrying on war against other Christians, or defending itself from Christian assault. The world is covered with forts to protect Christians from Christians, and every sea is covered with iron monsters ready to blow Christian brains into eternal froth. Industry is crippled, honest toil is robbed, and even beggary is taxed to defray the expenses of Christian warfare. There must be some other way to reform this world. We have tried creed and dogma and fable, and they have failed, and they have failed in all the nations dead. The people perish for the lack of knowledge. Nothing but education, scientific education, can benefit mankind. We must find out the laws of nature and conform to them. We need free bodies and free minds, free labor and free thought, chainless hands and fetterless brains. Free labor will give us wealth; free thought will give us truth

"We need men with moral courage to speak and write their real thoughts, and to stand by their convictions, even to the very death. We need have no fear of being too radical. The future will verify all grand and brave predictions.

"Science, the great iconoclast, has been busy since 1809, and by the highway of progress are the broken images of the past. On every hand the people advance. The vicar of God has been pushed from the throne of the Cæsars, and upon the roofs of the eternal city falls once more the shadow of the eagle. All has been accomplished by the heroic few. The men of science have explored heaven and earth, and with infinite patience have furnished the facts. The brave thinkers have used them. The gloomy caverns of superstition have been transformed into temples of thought, and the demons of the past are the angels of to-day.

"Science took a handful of sand, constructed a telescope, and with it explored the starry depths of heaven. Science wrested from the gods their thunderbolts, and now the elec-

tric spark, freighted with thought and love, flashes under all the waves of the sea. Science took a tear from the cheek of unpaid labor, converted it into steam, created a giant that turns with tireless arm the countless wheels of toil."

RECAPITULATION.

In looking back over what has been hurriedly written here it becomes very apparent that much pertaining to the origin, growth, character, modes, spirit, and effects of Christianity has been left unsaid. It was not the purpose of the writer to engage argumentatively on any of these points. The observations that have been made are perhaps more desultory and suggestive than thorough and exhaustive. To enter into a full examination of the Christian system of religion would require far more space than could be afforded here—a large volume by itself devoted to that subject would not be too much. More might properly have been said respecting the numerous fanatical and ill-advised campaigns called crusades, in which many millions of lives and hard-earned treasures were worse than wasted in the attempt to wrest Jerusalem and the Holy Land from the Infidel; more might justly have been said of the many bloody and depopulating wars which Christians have waged with each other and with other nations; more might have been said of the unjust and partial legislation which Christian law-makers have been guilty of; much more might with great propriety have been said of the cruel and inhuman persecutions which the church has inflicted upon its hated enemies, and of the efforts which she persistently made to hold back by direct force the rise and advance of science and reason. Much more might have been said of the terrible Inquisition, entering far more into details respecting the great enormities of which it was guilty; much might with propriety have been said of the warfare waged upon the disciples of Averroes, the Moors of Spain and the truths of a growing science which the Moors inaugurated and practiced, in which a large number of deserving people were most deeply wronged; more might have been said of the cruel, heartless, and inhuman persecution meted out to the Jews of

Spain, during which time they were deprived of their homes, their property, and all the rights which men hold dear, being forced to seek new homes in other more friendly lands, to say nothing of the great numbers who were deprived of their lives. Yes, much, much more might have been said on all these topics, as well as on many more not necessary even now to name.

But letting stand what has been said, and leaving unsaid all that has been omitted, and without engaging at all in argument to further sustain them, the following propositions may be set down as established, or at least susceptible of being established :

1. The gospel story upon which Christianity is based is unhistorical, and not corroborated by any contemporaneous history.

2. The story of Jesus may have been of Egyptian, Syriac, or an old Judean origin, as given in the legend of Jeshu, and either of them is far more probable than that a young Jewish maiden conceived by contact with a ghost, and gave birth to a God, the creator of heaven and earth.

3. Christianity is not new nor original ; its story, its dogmas, rites, sacraments, ceremonies, paraphernalia, symbols, priestly robes, images, saint-making, modes of worship, etc., all existed in the older pagan religions.

4. Claims of miracles and supernatural achievements are by no means peculiar to Christianity. Many other systems of religion have claimed them.

5. The teachings and morals of Jesus are defective, and at least were equaled by those of sages and reformers who lived long before him.

6. The four gospels are unauthentic or spurious productions. Legends and traditions of much they relate were in existence in the first century, but there is no proof that narratives ascribed to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John had an existence till the latter part of the second century.

7. Many of the early Christian Fathers were designing and dishonest. Their contentions and quarrels about matters of faith and government continued for centuries.

8. The claims and doctrines of Christianity are untrue and not conducive to human happiness.

9. The religion ascribed to Jesus has produced far less happiness than unhappiness. "Jesus suffered far less for humanity than humanity has suffered for Jesus."

10. The leaders and rulers in the Christian church have been among the worst tyrants and oppressors the world has known.

11. Christians have originated little in the domain of religion, save in its persecutions. They have invented more machines for causing pain and agony, more devices for causing utter wretchedness, than believers in any and all other religions.

12. Christianity has fostered ignorance, superstition, error; it has retarded education, science, and the highest civilization.

13. The supernaturalism on which it purports to be founded is unsustained; it does not exist.

14. The Bible, from which it obtains its authority, is untrue and unauthentic. It does not harmonize with simple and well-known facts of nature and science.

15. The Old and New Testaments were written by men of unknown veracity, and without any credentials of being inspired.

16. The Bible and Christianity recognize and sustain the tyranny of kings and despots. Both have protected and fostered human slavery.

17. Christianity, in its very nature, is unprogressive. It is held to have been instituted by Divinity himself, and consequently incapable of progression and improvement like art, science, literature, and invention.

18. The church has been filled with abuses and immoral excesses, revolting to the finer feelings of human nature.

19. Christianity gives no greater proofs of divine origin and protection than other religions. Brahmanism has existed a thousand years longer, and can boast having had double the number of adherents. Buddhism has existed six hundred years longer, spread much faster, and has now twice the number of adherents that Christianity can boast; besides it has not killed nor persecuted. Mohammedanism is six hun-

dred years younger, it spread much more rapidly, has had far less of fighting and killing for heresy, and numbers not far from the same number of believers to-day.

20. Christianity does not teach the highest truths which the world needs and is capable of receiving. The world needs that kind of religion which is conducive to happiness. Christianity has not been and is not now.

21. Christianity has cost incomputable treasures in labor and money, and has made to the world but a meager return, while on the other hand its opposites, science and reason, have yielded to the world ten times the value they have cost.

CONCLUSION.

We have arrived at the end of our task. We have taken a full and impartial view of the principal religions which the world has known. We have begun back almost at the pre-historic period, and come down, through the intervening millenniums, to our own time. We have found that in the religions that men have believed in there have been certain points of resemblance between them all. Each has had deities to whom it looked for guidance and protection; each endeavored to placate these deities by prayer, sacrifice, and worship; each got up a set of dogmas which formed a creed which the masses readily accepted as the revealed wisdom of heaven. Each system of religion has had its priesthood, which have assumed to be a mediatorial class between God and his children; and for their services, as go-betweens, they have exacted a remuneration that has enabled them to live in ease and plenty, if not in luxuriance and splendor. The priesthood in all religions have been a privileged class, which have demanded many perquisites and privileges for their indispensable services in making known the will of heaven to man, and for interceding with the eternal deity in behalf of man. The more ignorant the people have been, the more readily have they accepted these services of the priesthood, and the more credulous have they been in receiving as truth the extravagancies which the priesthood have imposed upon them. Faith has flourished most where knowledge has been the scarcest and ignorance the most abundant. It has not been to the interest of the privileged class for the masses to become too intelligent or too well informed as to the truths of nature or the facts which science teaches; in fact, they have been generally ignorant people themselves—they knew little else than the superstitious absurdities called religion. These they have imparted to others who knew less than themselves, and

these teachings were readily received as truths; but they were often not truths, but the merest errors man was capable of divising.

While this state of things has been common with all systems of religion, it is equally true that the different systems have borrowed from each other, the younger invariably adopting from the older. In this way the merest vagaries and chimeras have been perpetuated for hundreds and thousands of years.

Nothing is more true than that Christianity and Judaism, upon which it was founded, are far from being the oldest systems of religion that have been known in the world. This truth has been abundantly demonstrated in the foregoing pages. Neither can there be a reasonable doubt that the current story of the origin of the universe and the creation of the world has been handed down from the days of superstition and myths. Myths, indeed, seem to be the basis of the original religious systems. Now, there can be no reasonable doubt that if the story of the creation is a myth. If the account of the universal flood is untrue, if the story of the patriarchs is a fable, if the scene upon Mount Sinai and the issue of the Mosaic law is of human invention, if the miracles said to have been performed in Israel were fictions, and if the utterances of the so-called prophets were nothing more than the expressions of fervid religionists, with a spice of insanity, if, moreover, the doctrine of the trinity has taken its rise from the comparatively impure ideas of phallic worship, and if the worship of the Virgin Mary is identical with the adoration of Isis and Ishtar, then it will be seen at once that the whole current of religious teaching requires alteration. What that alteration will be, or when it will be effected, it is difficult to say with certainty; but it is, perhaps, fair to conclude that when it does take place *it shall be known by its fruits*. It may also be hoped that when religion is what it should be—the representative of truth as it is in the universe—it will no longer be at war with the inculcations of science, and that the two will be in perfect harmony and accord.

AXIOMS AND POSTULATES.

In view of the great errors that have existed in connection with all the religions of the past, and the zeal with which myths and falsehoods have been forced upon the recognition of the world, the incentive to introduce here the axioms or truisms laid down by Dr. Thomas Inman can hardly be resisted. They are precepts which, though they have been neglected by the usual writers on theological and religious subjects, deserve to be impressed upon the memory of every reader, every thinker, upon the subject of religion :

1. To beg a question is not equivalent to proving it.
2. Assertion is not proof, however pertinaciously it is reiterated.
3. A theologian is bound to permit himself, his tenets, and his books of reference to be judged by the same style or set of arguments which he uses for or against those of others.
4. "It may be," or "it might have been," is not equivalent to "it is" or "it was."
5. Credulity is inferior to reason.
6. All priests and prophets are human.
7. All human beings are subject to human propensities, passions, and infirmities.
8. Dogmatism is not equivalent to argument.
9. Abuse does not assist in demonstration.
10. Assertions contradicted by facts are valueless.
11. The antiquity of any belief or legend does not demonstrate its absolute value.
12. That an assertion has been credited in all ages does not make it true.
13. That which was a falsity at the first has not its nature changed by the lapse of time.
14. Past history is to be investigated on the same principles which guide us in the examination of current events.
15. The reality of an assumed truth is not demonstrated by the small or great number of those who believe it.
16. The value of any form of religion is to be judged by its consonance with the known operations of the Almighty

[the universe], and not by the personal vigor, enthusiasm, mental power, or numbers of those who adopt it.

17. The Almighty is omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent. He is not a man, nor does he require the aid of man to carry out his designs.

18. Assuming that a revelation has been made by God to man, it follows that what he has not communicated he did not consider it necessary for man to know.

19. A man who asserts himself to be the mouth-piece of, or an ambassador from, the Almighty is not to be credited on his *ipse dixit* alone.

20. Insanity is usually attended with ocular and aural delusions, which are considered as communications from the Almighty. It is often, also, coupled with religious enthusiasm. These manifestations are always to be distrusted. Delusions are not realities.

21. There is no law, human or divine, which excludes the Bible from the same kind of criticism as is applied to the sacred writings of such nations as the Hindoos, Persians, Chinese, Egyptians, Greeks, etc.

22. Similarity in matters of faith and practice indicates a common origin.

23. If any religion is of human origin, it does not become divine by being venerated.

24. One form of religion copied or adapted from another does not become divine by change of name.

25. The truth of a legend, of an assertion, or of a history is not established by its being reduced to writing, and subsequently held as sacred.

26. The antiquity of a book is not evidence of its truthfulness.

27. Tradition may be founded either on fact or fiction, or on both.

28. Tradition is not purified of its falsity by being committed to writing.

29. Any author can fabricate a legend and call it a tradition.

30. An author may describe himself as being different to what he is.

31. The name of a book does not prove its authorship.
32. Foresight is not prophecy.
33. A thing which has no existence cannot be seen.
34. A real prophecy cannot be couched in ambiguous or contradictory terms.
35. Figurative language does not necessarily relate to fact.
36. What are called miracles are not necessarily of divine origin.
37. Ancient miracles are to be tested by the same laws as modern wonders.
38. That which is called history is not necessarily true, and it may be wholly false.
39. Writers in all ages have, from various causes, falsified history.
40. The real value of history is to be tested by logical criticism.
41. The presence of legends in a history does not prove it to be wholly untrue.
42. A probable narrative is more worthy of credit than an improbable story.
43. A writer who relates a physical impossibility as an actual fact cannot be relied on as a historian.
44. A history which bears internal marks of fabrication may be rejected as worthless.
45. A history which has been fabricated may bear internal evidence of the date of its composition.
46. The fabrication or the publication of a fabulous history is evidence of the political, religious, or social aims of the writer, and of the condition of the people for whom the composition was prepared.
47. A fabricated history often incorporates legends current at the time of its composition, and contains stories to account for curious names, buildings, ruins, or other places.
48. A history once fabricated may be annotated or enlarged by other hands than the original authors, and then be regarded by many with veneration as true.
49. Those who modify a written history may copy the author's style in any history, or use their own diction.

50. Discrepancies, contradictions, or varied peculiarities in style in any history are evidence of divided authorship.

51. Similarity in style, diction, etc., is evidence of unity of idea in authorship.

52. Similarity in language, legends, faith, and practice amongst nations indicate a common origin, or a commixture.

53. It is more probable that the weak copy from the strong than that the proud and ancient should copy from the feeble upstart.

54. An agricultural people are not likely to be a missionary nation.

55. The Jews were an agricultural people, and a very feeble and weak one.

56. It is more probable that the Jews copied from the Phoenicians, Assyrians, and Babylonians than that the Hebrews were the originators.

57. The historians of any nation are not to be implicitly believed until their statements are compared with those of the people with whom the nation has come in contact.

58. When each of two nations mutually opposed asserts itself to be victorious over the other, neither can be trusted implicitly.

59. If misfortune comes upon a nation, it is not necessarily a proof of the superiority of the gods worshiped by the conquerors over those adored by the vanquished.

60. There is not one known test of national piety which will bear logical investigation.

Upon the foregoing axioms, which must be almost inevitably accepted as truisms by thoughtful men, the following postulates are formulated :

1. Jews are in existence now.

2. Jews once dwelt in Judea and Jerusalem, which town and country were comparatively diminutive.

3. The Hebrew language is allied to the Phoenician, Assyrian, and Babylonian, and not to the Egyptian.

4. The Jews have writings which they assert to be of great antiquity, and which they consider sacred.

5. The Jews practice circumcision and keep certain feasts.

6. The Jews have still certain laws, political, moral, social, and ceremonial.

7. The Hebrew writings contain legends of whose truth no direct evidence can be procured, but of whose falsity there is strong presumption; there being always *a priori* probability that a history founded wholly upon the supernatural has been fabricated.

8. Many sets of scribes, writing at different times, have taken part in the composition of the sacred books.

9. The Jewish language was materially modified by the captivity of the Hebrews in Babylon, and by their contact with the Greeks and Syrians. It was not modified by their alleged sojourn in Egypt.

10. The duration of the alleged Egyptian residence was nearly equal to the time which elapsed from the Babylonish captivity to the accession of Herod.

11. Other ancient nations had a strong faith in their own gods, as had the Jews in Jehovah.

12. It was the custom of conquerors to destroy or to capture the visible representations of the gods of their enemies, and everything connected with their worship. (See Psalm lxxiv, 3-8, and lxxix, 1.)

13. Jerusalem was five times pillaged by those of an opposite faith to the Jews: (1) by the Egyptians under Shishak, who took away the "the treasures of the house of the Lord and the king's house; he took all" (2 Chron. xii, 9); (2) by Jehoash, king of Samaria, who again despoiled the house of the Lord, and took away all its treasures, and those in the king's house (2 Kings xiv, 14; 2 Chron. xxv, 24); (3) by the kings of Tyre, Sidon, and Edom, who again took away the silver and gold, and the goodly, pleasant things (Joel iii, 3-6; Amos i, 9;) (4) by Pharoah Necho (2 Chron. xxxvi, 3); (5) by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Chron. xxxvi, 10-19).

14. Jerusalem was for six years under the reign of Athaliah, the daughter of Ahab, an enemy to the God of Judah and the murderer of the seed royal (2 Kings xi, 1-3).

15. Writings, or books, were not common among the Jews prior to the Babylonish captivity. They became very common afterward.

16. Christian persecution has destroyed many, if not all, of the most valued Jewish writings.

17. Many ancient Jewish books have wholly disappeared.

18. There is no evidence that a single manuscript or book was returned amongst the temple treasures at the restoration of the Jews (Ezra, i, 7-11 ; vi, 5).

19. There is evidence that the books of the Old Testament are not as old as many think them.

20. The names of the Almighty current amongst the Jews were the same as those in use amongst their neighbors.

21. The nomenclature, generally, of the Jews resembles that of the nations round about them.

22. The feasts and ceremonies of the Jews can all be traced to their neighbors.

23. The same is true of Christianity ; its dogmas and ceremonies can all be traced to pre-existing religions.

24. The fact that Christianity is a mere copy from the forms of ancient paganism proves either that it was not of divine origin, or that if God devised it he found himself under the necessity of appropriating the effete notions of heathen nations.

25. The Jews and Christians have engendered by far the greater share of the religious wars the world has known, and have believed most implicitly in putting down by brute force all who honestly differed from them.

These postulates might be continued almost indefinitely, but these are sufficient for present purposes, and are suggestive of much meditation.

In drawing these remarks to a close it may be stated that the object has been in all cases to present truths worthy the confidence and attention of every reader. The advocates of each religion that exists or has existed of course feel a partiality toward the same which almost disqualifies them as impartial witnesses. The writer of the foregoing pages has partiality for none of the religious systems the world has known, believing he can see serious defects in all. Very possibly he feels more partiality toward those systems which have been most tabooed by the theologians of Christendom, and is

more disposed to severely criticise the current religion of our own time. He has, however, intended to be just and to say nothing he believes untrue.

It is to be hoped truth, reason, and a spirit of humanity and tolerance toward those bearing opposite views may greatly increase among men; that an era of good feeling and liberality may inaugurate the "good time coming," or the "golden age of the future," when good deeds and kind actions toward our fellow-beings will weigh far more, be far more highly prized, than sacrifice, prayer, or ceremonial observances of all kinds. May Leigh Hunt's hero Abou Ben Adhem, as described in the following lines, be the type of a large number of men and women :

Abou Ben Adhem—may his tribe increase !
 Awoke one night from a dream of peace,
 And saw amid the moonlight in his room,
 Making it rich, and like a lily in bloom,
 An angel writing in a book of gold ;
 Exceeding peace had made Ben Adhem bold,
 And to the vision in the room he said,
 "What writest thou?" The vision raised its head,
 And with voice made all of sweet accord,
 Replied, "The names of those that love the Lord."
 "And is mine one?" said Abou. "Nay, not so,"
 Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
 But cheerily still, and said, "I pray thee, then,
 "Write me as one who loves his fellow-men."

The angel wrote and vanished. The next night
 He came again, with a great wakening light ;
 He showed the names whom love of God had blest,
 And lo! Ben Adhem's name led all the rest.

The following, written by S. P. Putnam, a friend of the author, expressly for this volume, is very fitting for the closing word :

In looking over the vast field surveyed in this work, several important inferences are noticeable.

First, we see that the gods are entirely the creation of human imagination. They are woven out of the hopes and fears of men. They are the forces of nature, the various aspects of the universe personified by a lively fancy. Every god of history can be explained in this natural way. There

is not the slightest evidence of any "revelation." If the gods have grown better, it is because humanity has grown better; because that of which they are the changing reflection has advanced in brightness and power. Every attribute of a god can be found in the infinitude of nature. Nature is the mother of all the gods, man has been the father, and superstition the midwife; and between these three a most wonderful brood has been spawned in the oceans of human thought and fancy. Not without benefit do we trace with wise comparison these grotesque productions of the past. They are a part of human history, and landmarks of progress. Though not facts of life, they are indications of growth; they are evolutions of that most superb of all forces, the human imagination. When once we have found out the secret of the gods—that they are not a divine conclave shaping and ordering the course of the world, but, like mosses on the tree, are merely signs of decaying and transforming life—then they become a brilliant and versatile museum, through which the fearless mind can wander and see that they came not from above, "all bright with burning plumes and splendors of the sky;" but like the worm they sprang and flashed from below, and their decaying images shall be a stratification upon which shall be built the temple of humanity, in which not even the greatest of them shall be a living light.

"Thought makes them and thought breaks them," and thought will use them simply as shining crystals by which to understand the obscurities and struggles of the past.

This natural history of the gods is most plainly evident in the career of Christianity. It has taken the dark and dreadful aspects of nature, enthroned them in the heart of the universe, and made them an avenging deity which has been the terror and despair of the race. The poet sings that "nature is red in tooth and claw." Truly it is. From our standpoint the phenomena of nature present many a bloody and cruel tendency; but Christianity, instead of relieving this tendency and throwing upon it the light of a tender beauty, has only intensified it and made it more horrible and powerful yet. Its so-called "Fatherhood" has been a tremendous monster, requiring the sacrifice of his own son before he

could be placated enough to forgive the sins and mistakes of men. How can Christianity claim to be a revelation of the divine beauty when it has thus deified the blackness of the grave and made it the controlling power of the universe; or, as Channing so tersely expresses it, "built a central gallows." So far as Christianity claims to be a revelation, it is a revelation of cruelty, injustice, and horror. It gives no real hope to the race. It has grown out of the dungeons and caverns of desolate nature. If there is anything kindly and sunny in it, this has come from the inborn sentiments of the human heart, and from the other and beautiful side of nature herself.

Orthodox Christianity is the enthronement of the cruel aspect of things; Liberal Christianity is the endeavor to put into its place the benign aspect of things. So far as the latter makes this a deity it is a superstition still, though of a nobler sort. Christianity, no matter how cheerful it may be made to appear, must pass entirely away, for any attempt to deify either the bright or dark side of things is futile—it is all the work of the imagination. We must come directly to nature herself and accept her exactly as she is, "now bright, now dark; now lending splendor, now reflecting gloom."

We thus find the seed of every god in the fertile bosom of the earth. Innumerable as the forests themselves, the gods spring from the same source; they grow, flourish, and decay by the same laws. Some are short-lived, almost, as the flowers; others endure for centuries, like the majesty of the oak; but all are bound finally to sink into the primeval dust, to be preserved only by the memory of man and to be no longer the ministers of his hope and fear.

Again, we find that all the gods are essentially alike. Solomon says that there is "nothing new under the sun;" and certainly this is true of the gods and religions of ancient times. None of them can boast of novelty. They are transformations one of the other. They are "oft-repeated tales." They lack invention. They each tell the same story. The same miracles are performed and the same wonders exhibited. There may be a change of uniform, and new masks may take the place of the old, but the identical drama is performed; there is the like opening and the like finale.

All the thousands of gods seem to pull the one string, and the "Punch and Judy" show is an everlasting repetition. The gods seem less capable of growth and expansion than any other product of the human imagination. The Koran is borrowed from the Bible; the New Testament is borrowed from the Old; and the Old Testament is borrowed from the Vedas.

The story of the fall of man is common to many religions, and so is the deluge. There have been sixteen crucified saviors, all made out of whole cloth. The "miraculous birth" is a frequent occurrence, and the "wise men" have wandered to many a place besides the stable at Bethlehem. The blind have received their sight, the lame been made to walk, and the dumb to speak in other countries than Judea. Jove has not been the only thunderer, nor Jesus the only one who has risen from the dead and ascended into heaven, nor the only one who is to return in flames of fire. Brahma was ahead of him by many centuries in this brilliant display of fireworks.

Christianity in its doctrines, forms, and ceremonies is made up entirely of what went before. The only really new thing in it is the personality of its reputed founder, and it looks as if even this was the product of an ancient myth. But certainly there is not a single original precept in the New Testament. There may be fresh vigor and hope, a wonderful illumination wrought from new circumstances and opportunity, but the same body of doctrine is there, the same heaven and hell, the same God and the same devil, that have always blessed and bothered humanity. The rite of baptism was nothing new. The Lord's Supper was a rejuvenated pagan meal. The Sabbath was six thousand years old. Christmas was a heathen festival. The mass was a Roman ceremony. Easter drifted from a remote antiquity. The cross was born in Egypt. The church grew from the old-time sepulcher, and the pulpit sprang from the synagogue. The trinity came from Plato. Total depravity came from the Hindoos, and hell from Persia. Christianity in its final outcome was simply a cosmopolitan religion, new only in its combination, a complex arrangement by which India, Greece, and Rome found satisfaction for their ancient philosophies, which needed a new dress in order to retain the affection and rev-

erence of the race. Christianity was the pantheon of all the gods molded into a magnificent trinity and millions of saints, and in this fresh fairy-land of rehabilitated divinities the race once more revelled with childlike credulity until with mature and dauntless mind it entered the portico of the edifice of science.

Again, we find after accurate survey that morality is entirely independent of the gods and religions. It has its own source in nature and the mind of man, and has derived but little good either from the teachings or the example of the gods. They have been both moral and immoral—the creatures of time and place. In no instance have they ever emphasized the absolute right. Their goodness has been national and provincial. They have reflected the vices of the age in which they ruled. They have been floating clouds of human prejudice, very like a whale or very like a weasel, as the changeable minds of their votaries determined. Matthew Arnold says that “religion is morality hightened by emotion.” We might also say that as frequently it is immorality hightened by emotion. Religion is simply emotion, and in its blind sweep curses as well as blesses. Where can we find greater exhibitions of cruelty, injustice, and sensuality than in the gods? To a certain extent religion depends on morality, but morality depends on religion never. Religion must have some morality, or the world would send it at once to the dogs. But morality has no need of religion. It grows of its own power. Humanity and nature are its eternal coadjutors. It passes the gods disdainfully by, for they have never yet added a single item to the moral acquisitions of man. Their commandments have been simply repetitions of human experience and reason. All that the gods have furnished is the thunder and the lightning.

Christianity may be a moral power in and through the human element that pervades it, but not through its God. He has become at last a decent fellow, simply because the world has insisted upon it. At first the Christian's God was exceedingly immoral. He thought nothing of raping a few thousand virgins; a murder seemed to please him very well. He could get along quite comfortably with adultery. He

winked at a little thieving on his own account. He has grown better since, not by any innate tendency, but because the outside, common sense morality of the world insisted that unless he did change, he would be thrown entirely overboard. So the Christians' god has slowly conformed to the increasing morality of man. It has always, however, been behind the times, and not ahead. It has never initiated a single reform. It has never given a new commandment; that has always come from the heart of man; and God has opposed it until it became popular, and then he has thundered in its praise. God, instead of being in any sense the creator of morality, has simply been its courtier, its flatterer, its supple slave; and so the gods have always the vices of a slave. They always curse the "new morality," and have no more sympathy with virile ethics than a doll has with a growing child; and one might just as well say that a doll is necessary to the growth and beauty of the child that holds it as to say that a god is necessary to the moral progress of the race. The progress goes on, whether the gods will or no; and the gods are just as often found upon the wrong side as upon the right side, and, like us poor mortals, their *hindsight* is vastly better than their *foresight*. The gods, like the priests, only furnish the *millinery* of ethics. The growing body itself springs from the pulse of universal humanity, and its naked grandeur far surpasses the embroideries of heaven.

Again, while we find that the gods and religions have been off and on with a genuine morality, now for it, and now against it, they have ever been the foe of science. True knowledge has always had to battle them. They have ever been the fast friends of ignorance. In itself, simply as feeling, religion may not be opposed to science, but as a matter of fact, in its historic expression, it has always been opposed to science. There has been from time immemorial a bitter antagonism. This has been most conclusively shown in Draper's "Conflict of Science and Religion." We may so define religion that it may harmonize with knowledge, but the gods which have actually swayed the minds of men have fought against every inch of advancement. Science has never found a single helper in any of those dark deities. Astron-

omy, geology, chemistry, the railroad, the electric telegraph, have come by human grit, and never by celestial assistance. No god has ever led the way. Whenever a god undertakes to lead, there is a forty-years' wandering in the wilderness; it is science that cuts its way into the promised land. There is no reason why we should be grateful to the gods; rather should the gods be thankful that humanity has allowed them to exist so long as it has in their lazy dignity. Such leniency is entirely misplaced, for the "aristocracy of the skies" have ever been a bar to discovery. They have dreaded the light; they have opposed investigation; they have wanted the human race "tied up," for they have ever felt that more truth was fatal to their supremacy. It is possible that by a plentiful use of the dictionary, religion may be transformed into an angel of light, but in the past it has been an angel of darkness, and has loved to hover in the midnight of ignorance, thinking that there only it could wing its happy flight; and so on every occasion it has summoned its innumerable divinities to push back the rushing dawn, but, like Dame Partington, they have always had to give up and let the mighty ocean of human progress have its own sweet way.

Finally, we find that of whatever apparent use the gods and religions might have been in the olden time, they are now eternally to be put aside. They can no longer minister even to the fancy of men. Even as dolls they are "played out." Mankind has now advanced to pure science. The heavens are now cleared of deities, and the sun and stars alone pursue their majestic way. Man is the highest conscious intelligence which we know anything about. There is neither one god nor many gods. There is simply the universe with its manifold capacities and amazing infinitude. There is endless force and the magnificent transformations of matter. There is the potency of man impinging upon crude material with creative energy and new and beautiful order. This is all we have. It is enough for immortal progress. Instead of a thousand changing gods we have vast imperial nature sweeping on in unutterable music and light; we have the sturdy hand of science unlocking a million secrets; we have the brow of man wearing fresh laurels from day to day. We bid farewell

to the pantheon and take up our abode in the temple of humanity, where we no longer worship, but work ; where we dwell in the light of reason, of simple human friendship, rejoicing in the beauty of earth and disdaining the imaginary splendors of heaven almost forgotten in the magnificence of nature's advancement and improvment.

Such are some of the rich and valuable lessons derived from a survey of this work. After this look into "the backward and abysm of time" our forward look is more splendid and inspiring. We traverse the dim fields of the past, trace the wreck of many a colossal god, see the gold mingled with the dust, and from the weird, fantastic scene take the hand of science with more noble confidence, and contemplate her starry brow with more elated mind. This admirable study of the past gives fresh impetus to our progress. What the gods have vainly tried to do we will accomplish. Whatever gleams of promise and delight they have flashed forth from the infinite bosom of nature we will makes more illustrious and more fruitful still. Laying aside the errors and superstitions of the childhood of the race, we will still preserve its fresh vitality. The poetry, the beauty, the romance, the glory, of the gods have not passed away ; they shine in more sublime and beneficent achievements, for the only god we now have is the endless universe itself, and the only creator that shapes, combines, modifies, and makes more entrancing and useful the myriad forces about us, is that supreme intelligence that finds its throne in the brain of man and its angels in his skilful fingers.